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J. R. R. Clean &  
with the Author's  
kind regards.

July. 1868.



ON  
THE ARTS OF DECORATION  
AT THE  
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION  
AT PARIS,  
A.D. 1867,  
CONSISTING OF REPORTS,  
TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT  
ON  
CLASS XV. DECORATION, &c.  
CLASS XVIII. CARPETS, TAPESTRIES, &c.  
CLASS XIX. PAPER HANGINGS, &c.  
BY  
**M. DIGBY WYATT,**  
ARCHITECT AND BRITISH JUROR FOR CLASS XV.  
AND  
TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT  
ON  
“OUVRAGES DE TAPISSIER ET DE DECORATEUR,”  
BY  
**JULES DIETERLE & M. DIGBY WYATT.**

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LONDON 1868.

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REPORT on DECORATIVE WORK and UPHOLSTERY.—  
(Class 15.)—By M. DIGBY WYATT, Architect.MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

THERE is, probably, no class of the community upon whom international exhibitions confer greater benefits than the individuals who act as jurors on such occasions; since the opportunities afforded to them of "taking stock," as it were, not only of the material, but of the intellectual, progress made by each nation in special branches of industry, are of the most favourable kind. Such opportunities obviously include an unrestrained interchange of ideas and comparison of impressions and experiences between those in each country who may have been selected to represent, and may therefore be assumed as likely to exercise a marked influence upon, the particular branches of industry with reference to which they may have been called upon to exercise the functions of jurors. While it is depressing on the one hand to observe retrogression, it is, on the other, delightful to note advance, and to have to record the steps by which auspicious change may have been effected, opening up vistas of increased remunerative employment for skilled labour, and a consequent amelioration in the social position of those who have to live "by the sweat of their brows." Having closely followed the details, in their relation to industrial art, of each international exhibition since the first ever-memorable experiment in 1851, I am happy to be able on the present occasion to place on record my impression that never in the history of labour has change more rapid, improvement more uniform, or present excellence pregnant in a higher degree with future still greater perfection, characterised any corresponding period than has distinguished the forward march of the arts of decoration in the principal nations of Europe during the last 18 years. What the Germans call an "Entwickelungzeit," or "transitional period," may be fairly dated from the year in which producers began "to gird up their loins" in preparation for that noble rivalry of nations in the arts of peace which culminated in the fierce industrial tournament of 1851; and from that date to the present there has been an incessant sharpening up of the intellectual weapons, and remedying defects in the armour, of those who took the most conspicuous part in that great *mélée*. In no branches of industry do this care and energy make themselves more manifest than in those which are

Benefits  
confferred  
by Inter-  
national  
Exhibitions,on jurors  
especially.Progress  
effected  
since 1851.

Generally.

And in  
classes 14 &  
15 espe-  
cially.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Apparent  
obvious  
connection

between  
decoration  
and cabinet  
making.

Deficient  
space in the  
Exhibition  
for display-  
ing this  
combination.

A title to  
adequate  
space in  
future exhi-  
bitions sug-  
gested as a  
class of  
reward.

comprehended in classes 14 and 15 of the Exhibition of 1867.

Immediately upon the assembly of the jurors of those classes face to face with the objects they were called upon to judge, it was recognised that it would be scarcely possible to establish, practically, a strict line of demarcation between what should rightly constitute the "hunting grounds" of each; and it was therefore resolved that all productions should be regarded as common to both which could be assumed as ministering to man's enjoyment by making his domestic hearth, taken in its widest sense, the abode of beauty. Distinctions which may be perfectly reasonable upon paper and consistent with sound principles of classification, become obviously inapplicable when their limits are overstepped in a great number of objects forming the staple produce of manufacturers whose habit it may be to blend in their trade the various branches artificially separated from one another in a catalogue for the sake of classification. In practice it is indeed most satisfactory that this blending should exist, for without it there would be little chance of any harmonious result in the fitting up of a house. Unless the provinces of the decorator and of the cabinet-maker are to a great extent incorporated there is every likelihood that instead of the labours of the former being subordinated to those of the latter, the effect of the most elaborate furniture will be overpowered by the greater brilliancy of the walls and ceilings; while, on the other hand, should the decoration be really a work of art, unless the cabinet-maker or upholsterer be a man of taste and self-denial his marqueterie and inlays, and his florid carpets and curtains, will reduce the painter's work to comparative insipidity. It is one of the greatest defects of the present Exhibition that the number of those desiring to make a display of their talents has been so great as to make it impossible to accord to any one firm sufficient room for effectually and effectively representing the complete equipment of an apartment. In fact, the multitude of small exhibitors in group 3 of the present Exhibition is such as to make it desirable that some steps should be taken to make the relative position of exhibitors rewarded by the jury on the present occasion the basis of prescriptive right to allotments of space of exceptional extent in any future Exhibition. To win such a right would at any time, I have little doubt, procure a most active competition and a steady maintenance of excellence, since the conclusion that future success could only be founded on present activity would force itself most keenly on the attention of manufacturers.

Younger partners would stir up heads of old firms, who, having already carried off golden spoils from the past, are apt to get somewhat apathetic with regard to the future, and many a fresh start would result.

Amongst the germs of such "fresh starts" shown in the present Exhibition, none are more important as affecting the arts of decoration in the future than the new life which in all countries appears to have been infused into the revivals of the manufacture of terra-cotta, of the application of enamel and vitrified colours upon earthenware or metallic bases to the general purposes of the decorator, and of the art of mosaic-working in every form. These revivals have as yet most largely affected "furniture, ornaments, and decorations for the services of the church"—items specially included in class 15; but there are many indications that they will be rapidly extended in every direction into "civil structures" of every description, from national museums to ladies' boudoirs.

The materials and the processes of earthenware making and glazing, and of enamelling and mosaic working, will, no doubt, be duly noticed by the reporters on ceramics, metal-work, and the use of both in structure generally. My function will, therefore, be limited to a notice of the application of those processes to *decoration* generally.

In enumerating these "fresh starts" terra-cotta has been put first because it serves not only by itself as an element of decoration, but as also furnishing the earthenware base for enamel colouring. Italy, the country in which the art of terra-cotta working was carried furthest in the Middle Ages and during the period of the Renaissance, still retains much of its ancient skill; and it is to be regretted that Boni, of Milan, alone appeared to be present; while Furlani and Bacci, of Florence; Papi, of Sienna, Martinoz, of Palermo; and Vanni, of Impruneta, are unrepresented at the present Exhibition. This is of less consequence since Boni's archway and panelling in the park are very meritorious, and since fine specimens of the productions of several of the absent manufacturers may be studied in the museum at South Kensington. The Italian terra-cottas are soft by comparison with those of France and England, ranking, however, in hardness and resistance to humidity before those of the Eastern nations, and of Portugal and Spain. It is much to be doubted whether they would stand the alternations of soaking rain and sudden frost which distinguish our northern climate. The best French contribution of terra-cotta is by Virebent, of Toulouse, whose work in former exhibitions has been better than it now is in point

MR. DIGBY  
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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Chief novi-  
ties in deco-  
ration of  
present  
Exhibition,  
viz.,  
Terra-cotta,  
Enamel,  
Mosaic.

Limits of  
this report,  
noticing  
these novi-  
ties under  
their deco-  
rative aspect  
only.

Terra-cotta.

Italian.

Spanish.  
Portuguese.

French.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Prussian.

Austrian.

English.

Represented  
by Messrs.  
Blanchard,

and Mr. J.  
M. Blash-  
field.

Work done  
for the new  
India Office,  
the Depart-  
ment of  
Science and  
Art, the  
Marquis of  
Northamp-  
ton.

of form. My jury also commended the terra-cotta work of M<sup>me</sup>. Veuve de Bay, which is connected with the chapel in the park, and which, as subservient to the decoration of the church, fell within their province. March, of Charlottenburg, near Berlin, shows, by a large archway in the gallery of machines, how well fitted he is to cope with the supply of architectural terra-cotta work upon the most massive scale. His goods (as are those by Drasche, of Vienna) are extraordinarily cheap. Those who remember Schinkel's Bau-Academie at Berlin will be assured that good terra-cotta work is no novelty in Prussia.

In England, as is well known, the old establishment of Coade, for which Bacon and other sculptors worked so much, produced a great quantity of bold terra-cotta; but, after the decline of that firm, for a considerable period the art languished. Sparks of the old fire still lingered in the embers of such firms as that of Messrs. Blanchard; and these have been blown into a new life by the rapidly-increasing demand for some material more durable than most of the common building stones under the deteriorating influences of such an atmosphere as that of London. To no one is the revival of the art of terra-cotta making more indebted than to Mr. J. M. Blashfield, of Stamford. His acquaintance with the constituents of the English clays and with their treatment by the addition of foreign substances so as to obtain perfect vitrification without distortion; his elaborate experiments upon the best forms of kilns, fuel, cooling, &c.; and especially his natural taste for sculpture and for models of the purest form only, have borne good fruit in England, and raised the manufacture into one of really national importance. His exhibition this year appeared to the juries of classes 14 and 15 to be so important to classes 17 and 65 that it was determined that he should be referred to them; but great admiration was expressed for his large mediaeval window for Dulwich new college, from designs by Mr. Charles Barry; his chimney-piece, executed for the new India Office, and for many other admirable specimens of his skill; not omitting the base of the large compartment of terra-cotta work executed for the Department of Science and Art, and exhibited in the outer circle of the building. It is to be regretted that his limitation as to space prevented his contributing some of the great garden decorations he has executed from my designs for the Marquis of Northampton, at Castle Ashby. These, including the entrance-gate piers, are as yet, I believe, unequalled for extent and excellence of manufacture by any terra-cotta work done in England. This work will,

however, have to yield the place of honour to the immense works done, in progress and projected, for the buildings of the Horticultural Society, the great central Royal Albert Hall of Arts and Sciences, and the buildings of the Department of Science and Art. What has been as yet done has been mainly executed by Messrs. Blanchard, and in a style which reflects great credit upon the skill and dexterity of the firm. Many of the ingenious arrangements for the adaptation of the terra-cotta work for structural purposes were due to poor Captain Fowke, while to Mr. Godfrey Sykes we are indebted for much very beautiful design and modelling. Both, alas! have died too early for their country and their friends. Of the success of the united efforts of Captain Fowke, Mr. Sykes, and Mr. Blanchard, the Department of Scence and Art gives admirable evidence, both in the outer zone in the building, and in the testing-house in the park. In these fine specimens the ornamental portions—as, for instance, the figures and foliage, and their combination in contrast with lines of mouldings and inclosing forms—leave little to be desired; and it is rather in the quantity of the architectural parts, in the balance of the due proportion to be maintained between functional and non-functional components of the structure, that the result falls short of perfection. After allowing for such small defects, there yet remains behind ample evidence of daring novelty and general capacity; and all who may hereafter perhaps improve upon these experiments (for such, though conducted upon a vast scale, they were) will have reason to be thankful that they were made, and so healthy an impulse given to the manufacture at a moment when it most unquestionably needed it.

In Austria, Henri Drasche, of Vienna, makes a very effective though unequal show in the park. Four of his candelabra, after a very good model, and two or three of his vases, of which some have twisted a little in cooling, are beyond the average of such goods in all respects.

The next stage in adapting terra-cotta for decorative use, consisting in giving it an enamelled surface upon which vitrifiable colour may be floated, has been well attained in every country from the East to the West. In Prussia, perhaps, more successfully than in any other, since nothing can excel the admirable white stoves of several of her leading manufacturers. These are, however, quite equalled by a capital specimen shown by O. H. Akerlind, of Stockholm. The reporter upon ceramic art will, no doubt dwell upon the amazing development which has taken place in the revival of all the old processes of “faience,” “majolica,” and

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Services  
rendered  
by Captain  
Fowke and  
Mr. Godfrey  
Sykes.

Austrian  
terra-cotta  
by Drasche.

Terra-cottas  
with  
enamelled  
surfaces.

Prussian.

Swedish.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

English.  
French.

Excellent  
reproduc-  
tions of  
Persian and  
Palissy  
faience in  
France.—

And original  
works.

“mezzo-majolica.” We in England have mainly taken up encaustic tile-making, and imitation of the Azulejos of Spain, in which Minton and Maw so greatly excel; while in France the faïences de Perse have engaged most attention; and next to them the revival of faience à la Bernard de Palissy. Of the former of these two, in its application to decorative purposes, the Imperial Manufacture of Sèvres, and the exhibits of MM. Deck, Collinot, Rousseau, Laurent, Utzschneider, and Macé, furnish most admirable specimens; and of the latter the exhibits of MM. Avisseau, Signoret, Jean, Barbizet, and Pull. By the last-named a chimney-piece in the faience court, imitated from a well-known one by Bernard de Palissy, in the Louvre, has been manufactured as a *tour de force*. Both these revivals are so successful as to deceive the eyes of any but accomplished connoisseurs, and for every decorative purpose, for which the originals were ever employed, these reproductions of the nineteenth century are equally available.

It is somewhat unjust to French ingenuity and talent to characterise all that has been produced in these branches of industry as “reproductions” only. It is one of the special characteristics of the Gallic temperament that it can never be satisfied with simple reproduction. Of this tendency I had many amusing instances in endeavouring to keep the French sculptors of ornament to a strict restoration of fragments, damaged in the original models, of the portions of monuments set up in the courts of the Crystal Palace. It was scarcely possible to turn one’s back for a few hours without finding, on returning, that the workman had been attempting to smuggle in a little “motif,” as he called it, of his own. A comparison of the “style de l’Empire” with real classical work will at once prove how hard it is for a Frenchman to copy when he has the slightest chance of originating. In industrial art this tendency is an element of progress of inestimable value; but I may be pardoned for noticing here that it is tending every day, in the insidious guise of “restoration,” to the destruction of the value in relation to the history of art of the ornamental, and in some cases of the structural, details of almost all the great relics of decorative art in France. May there long be averted from our royal and noble tombs and monuments the operations which those of France have in some cases undergone, and with which in others they are threatened!

To return to the details of these ceramic revivals, the student will do well to observe a process which unites the use of enamelled faience with the principle of mosaic work on the “opus sectile” system of the Romans. Of this two

French  
Sèvres.  
Faience  
pictures on  
the “dis-  
sected map”  
system.

ambitious examples will be found on the walls of the Sèvres Court, painted by no less able an artist than Yvon. The method of working has this in common with that by means of which a picture in stained glass is produced, that in both the artist makes his cartoon, and so arranges his composition that the whole surface of the picture may be cut up into a number of pieces, without allowing any of the lines in which the cuts are to be made to interfere with the leading forms or surfaces. Pieces of common earthenware in the one case, and of glass in the other, are then cut out, or otherwise made to correspond with the various portions into which the original design, or cartoon, may have been subdivided. The earthenware is then floated over with a white enamel, and handed over, as the glass is, to an artist to paint in vitrifiable colours until each piece is made to correspond with its model in the cartoon; after which both are passed through the kiln and fired to make the colouring permanent. The glass is then handed over to the glazier, whose lead lines fall exactly into those of the subdivisions of the cartoon; and the earthenware to a mason, who fixes the several pieces against the surface to be decorated, and then "points up" his joints, which correspond in all respects with those of the lead lines of the glass picture, excepting that many of the minute subdivisions, separating colour from colour, which are necessary for the transparent may be omitted for the opaque picture. This method of making up opaque pictures was, and still is, practised in Persia and India, and by all the minor Orientals whose arts are founded on those great fountain-heads of art-inspiration; but the use of this mosaic arrangement of plaques of faience is by them generally restricted to ornament and the formation of different compartments for the reception of ornament.

The pictures in question, in spite of the reputation of the painter, are not in all respects satisfactory, but they are sufficiently so to prove the efficiency of the process; and I cannot but believe that for our climate, in which frescoes do not appear to be able to live, this process appears to offer almost the only means by which the painter's art can be combined with the sculptor's and architect's in monumental structures, at any rate, externally. It is one by means of which the artist realises his own conception, instead of its having to pass, as it were, through the more or less perfect "translation" of the pictorial mosaic worker; its permanence ought certainly to equal that of any mosaic; and it ought to be produced, at the utmost, at one third of the price of a mosaic rendering of the same theme in the same colours. It appears to me specially available for painting in "grisaille"

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c

Analogy of  
process with  
which  
pictures in  
stained glass  
are pro-  
duced.

Process of  
Eastern  
origin.

Perma-  
nence,

and cheap-  
ness of the  
process;

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

its suit-  
ability for  
England.

Suggested  
reproduc-  
tion of  
Raffaelli's  
cartoons by  
means of it,  
in combina-  
tion with  
photo-  
graphy.

Rousseau's  
specimens.

Ingredients  
procurable  
for experi-  
menting.

Improve-  
ments in  
Maw's and  
Minton's  
majolica.

Painted  
plaques,  
French.

or "camaieu," as in either of those methods the joints, when pointed up in the fundamental colour, might be made to almost entirely melt into the general tones of the picture. It is, in fact, a process for which there exists, I believe, a very considerable future; and I can conceive few more excellent ways of educating some young students or artists in England than would be afforded by setting them to reproduce—with the assistance of photographs, full size, of the various heads and principal parts, which might possibly be transferred to the surface of the white enamel by the process of M. Joubert, or by some other, such as that shown by M. Poyard, of Paris—the cartoons of Raphael. Very slight modifications, as in large masses of monochrome drapery, would be necessary to adapt these compositions for reproduction in coloured faience; and once burnt and fixed to the walls, say of the new buildings for the Department of Science and Art or of the proposed Albert Hall, we should have succeeded in placing on record, in an all but imperishable form, those great masterpieces whose existence only upon perishable paper or in imperfectly-executed tapestries gives but a poor pledge for their future perfect preservation.

Already this method is passing in France from the establishments of the State to the ateliers of private industry, and a very fair sample of what may be readily produced therein is shown by Mr. E. Rousseau, of Paris. It may possibly be useful to amateurs and others who may desire to make experiments in the by no means difficult art of painting on faience, to know that colours duly "fritted" may be procured in Paris of M. Guyonnet-Colville, Rue des Vinaigriers, No. 34, or of M. Lacroix, Rue Parmentier, No. 8, who exhibit very perfect specimens. Those who may desire to go more closely into the whole of the technical processes may be referred to an excellent work by M. Salvétat, principal chemist to the Imperial manufactory at Sévres.\*

In our own country the tiles of Maw and Minton are too well known and too much used to need notice here; it is enough to say that both were excellent and highly appreciated by foreigners, who recognized a marked advance since 1862 in the evenness and brilliancy of the transparent enamel colours used on the majolica tiles of the first-named house. In Portugal some very good common faience tiles were shown. In France, however, the progress made has been most rapid, and the tiles made in imitation of old Persian examples are first-rate in quality and effect. Some

\* "Leçons de Céramique Professées à l'Ecole Centrale des Arts et Métiers." Paris : Eugène Lacroix.

of the large faience plaques painted by artists of the first distinction, such as Hamon, Anker, Ravier, Lessore, and Bouquet, are both of large dimension and admirable design, realized in the liveliest colouring, and with a happy freedom of handling which betrays the dexterity of the highly educated and accomplished artist. The little landscapes by the last named are extraordinarily full and brilliant. Such plaques are veritable pictures, and for insertion in architectural frames, as for over-doors, in chimney-pieces, or simply as panels enclosed in a modest framework of mouldings formed upon the surface of external or internal walls, nothing could be more suitable for our climate, or more likely to produce agreeable and permanent effect in decoration. Similar plaques, with more or less brilliancy of colouring and excellence of drawing, are shown by Wedgwood and Minton, of England, and by Dutch and Belgian manufacturers.

Gille Jeune has a chimney-piece entirely in china, the design of which is unpleasing, but in which the manufacturing difficulties have been well overcome. Charles Poyard's burnt-in photography on the surface of china is perfect in black, umber, brown, and Pompeian red; and his successful experiments show us that the chiaroscuro, being rendered in either of those tones, may be floated over with enamel colours, so as to produce a fully tinted picture at a very moderate cost.

H. Pinart exhibits the results of a process calculated to greatly facilitate the labours of the amateur. He prepares a liquid into which the terra-cotta object is dipped. As soon as this liquid is dry, which takes place in a few minutes, he proceeds to paint upon it with colours which he prepares. The painting finished, the object is consigned to a furnace, in which it is baked. The result is that one operation fixes the ground and the colours, and leaves upon the surface a light and agreeable glaze. The colours in the kiln slightly blend with the stanniferous enamel covering (corresponding to the adobe of mezzo-majolica) and produce an agreeable effect of transparency. Jean, of the Boulevard Malesherbes, Paris, employs the original clay of Nevers, and, by means of its use, has succeeded in giving great hardness to his productions, both in the clay and in the subsequent application of the enamel colours. He exhibits a "torchère," some 8 ft. high, in which he has overcome many very great difficulties in the potter's art; and a fountain of large dimensions, of which the design and colouring are remarkably good. Signoret, of Nevers, also works the old Nivernais clay successfully, and his large "cistern" has the real "chic" of an old specimen.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

English,  
Dutch, and  
Belgian.

French ex-  
hibitors.  
Gille Jeune.

Poyard.

Jean.

Signoret.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Collinot.

Deck.

Enamels on  
metal bases.

On iron.

French.  
English.

In 1849.

Now.

Future of  
the trade.

Baugh & Co.  
E. Paris.

I cannot quit this branch of the decorative aspect of faience without commenting specially on the invention and genius displayed by M. Collinot. An old "officier en retraite," this gentleman has profited by his studies in Algeria and the East, while in service, to found now in his retirement an admirable industry. In a small pavilion within the building he has so grouped specimens of his imitations of Oriental faience as to demonstrate the part they may be made to play in architectural embellishment. His Persian tile wall linings, his little fountain niche, his vases with decorations in colour "incrustés," and the cornice columns and window of his pavilion are worthy of most careful study, and are more truly "inspirés de l'Orient" than the work of any other manufacturer of a similar class of goods, except perhaps M. Deck. The estimation in which his productions are held in Paris is proved by their immediate sale, at good prices, to persons known to possess most highly cultivated taste.

Turning now to the employment of enamel colours on metallic bases, it is right to observe that this art is one which has never fallen quite into desuetude; but, on the other hand, it has never yet taken up the position which is, I believe, reserved for it in industrial art. As early as the date of the Parisian Exposition of 1849, the Royal manufactory of Sèvres exhibited one or two large sheets of wrought iron covered with artistic paintings in enamel in grisaille, in imitation of the enamels of Reymon, Ponce, and other masters of the latter part of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries; and at each exhibition since that date exceptional evidence of the power to supply a demand for such goods, should it arise, was manifested. The English had contemporaneously, and steadily, exhibited their power to supply a similar demand; but their products were limited to the manufacture of objects of domestic utility.

Mr. Cole and I examined the Sèvres enamels on iron together attentively in 1849, and on our return we both, I believe, endeavoured to induce manufacturers to take up this branch of production. The future we both foresaw for such art workmanship; which would not, however, be suddenly called into existence at our bidding. Time alone was wanting.

On the present occasion both nations show that the long-expected demand has arisen, and there is no doubt that a great trade will soon grow up in iron plates enamelled and painted, not only for lettering, signboards, name-plates, &c. but for ornamental tablets of all kinds available for introduction into the decoration of buildings and furniture. Messrs.

Baugh and Co. of Birmingham, and Messrs. E. Paris, of Bercy, near Paris, make an almost exactly similar class of goods, and their businesses are increasing most rapidly. The Department of Science and Art, with a most laudable activity, has been endeavouring to direct this branch of manufacture in England into a more artistic line than it might have otherwise assumed, and exhibits an interesting specimen of an application of iron enamelled plates, decorated with diaper patterns, to the formation of ornamental fireproof ceilings. By this method of construction, "instead of using wooden laths between the iron joists of the floor, and making the floor of concrete and the ceiling of plaster, the enamelled ceiling supports the concrete and supersedes the plastering." Such is Mr. Cole's description of his idea, and he adds that such "ceilings may be made either of pottery or of iron enamelled. They are much more easily cleaned, and are more fireproof than the old mode, and admit of any amount of decoration that may be required." Care should, of course, be taken in using such ceilings, to guard against any disagreeable consequences resulting from rapid condensation upon the surface of the enamel, and in their construction from overweighting the enamel plates with concrete, causing the plates to "bag" and "bulge." The idea is a good one, and will, no doubt, be improved upon and made largely serviceable. Should we ever have a new National Gallery, it would be peculiarly suited for use in its construction. It is to be regretted that Messrs. Baugh and Co., of Birmingham, by whom the plates made for this ceiling were manufactured, should not have exhibited on their own account, as I believe that the display of such an ornamental roof as that which they have lately put up over Mr. Charles Buxton's drinking-fountain at the corner of Great George-street, Westminster, misapplied as it certainly appears there, would have been one of the most important novelties as affecting the future of external decoration in England. Their absence is, in some degree, compensated for by the presence of Mr. Skidmore, whose very important works in ornamental metal-work combined with enamelling, for the monument to the late Prince Consort, and for much ecclesiastical furniture and decoration, show strong indications of the rapid progress which has been lately made in England towards a general utilisation of the processes of enamelling on metal bases. It may be especially noted that Messrs. E. Paris and Co., of Bercy, show specimens of enamelling upon cast, as well as upon wrought iron.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Mr. Cole's  
iron ena-  
melled  
ceilings.

Mr. Skid-  
more's  
efforts.

It is in the perfection of the artistic decoration of such enamels upon a small scale that the French have of late

Miniature  
painted  
enamels.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Lepec.

Meyer.

Cloisonné  
enamels.  
Christofle,  
Barbe-  
dienné.  
Champs  
levés  
enamels,  
Thierry,  
Rusand.  
Others by  
Dotin, &c.

Suggestions  
for develop-  
ment of  
artistic  
enamelling  
in England.

made such great strides. The beautiful enamels of Lepec are painted with a richer palette, and with more subtle effects of metallic lustre and translucency, than any enamels, ancient or modern, which I have ever yet had an opportunity of seeing. He is an artist of first-rate merit, and his productions (the best of which are noble commissions from Mr. Alfred Morrison) will hereafter be treasured in "museums of the history of labour," with the most precious relics of Leonard Limousin, Courtois, and other great masters of the French Renaissance. While Lepec's style is altogether original, the extraordinary spirit of these masters' work is perfectly imitated by M. Alfred Meyer, an artist attached to the Imperial manufactory at Sèvres. Amongst his works a series of small decorative panels adapted for use by jewellers, and a larger panel suitable for insertion into a cabinet or other piece of furniture, and representing the head of a lady, with an inscription beneath commencing with the words "Sola manet virtus," are worthy of the most careful study by those who would desire to revive this branch of the art of enamel-painting in England. The aptitude of the French, for the perfect imitation of the cloisonné enamels of the Byzantine Greeks is shown capitally by Christofle and Barbedienne, for the reproduction of the German and Limoges Mediæval Champs levés enamels by Thierry and Poussielgue Rusand, and for that of the works of the later French enamellers by Dotin, Robillard, and Charlot—all art workmen of remarkable skill, and whose productions daily deceive in the "bric-à-brac" market (as do those of Salviati and Cortilazzo in other departments) all but the most accomplished connoisseurs.

I have dwelt with more enthusiasm upon the works of these artists because I know full well how easy it would be in England to rival, if not excel them. The multitude of admirable woodcut illustrations which appear week by week in England prove incontestably that we have an abundance of young artists perfectly capable of doing such work if some of them would but pay attention to the few simple processes essential to be mastered; and, if this evidence should be insufficient, the progress made of late years in the designing and execution of stained glass would indicate our national capability to excel in any similar class of production. What is really wanting in England in the decorative arts at the present moment is far more intelligent demand than capable producers. It is, however, scarcely just to complain when such a wonderful awakening to what is good has taken place within the last ten years on the part of both buyers and producers. Of one thing at least I am certain, that, rapid as

may have been the progress of all other countries in this direction over the same term of years, and whatever may be the position of England as to the diffusion of taste and the popular correct judgment of beauty, our advance has been relatively more rapid than that of any country; and in no land are the prospects of that advance proving continuous and strenuous more auspicious than in our own. What is specially observable in France at the present time is the prevalent combination of a general intellectual activity of interest in the fine and decorative arts of the hour, with a corresponding lively appreciation of the past. The French designer is always seeking "de s'inspirer"—to pick up from the past something which he may use in the present. He recognizes the fact that novelty can be rarely anything but re-combination; and that, addressing himself to the gratification of the tastes of those whose eyes have been educated on the enjoyment of the best works by which they have been surrounded in the monuments of France from their earliest age, he can scarcely please unless his ideas are more or less cast in the moulds to which his clients have been accustomed. This it is which leads modern French designers to such a reverential conservation of the styles of Louis XIV., XV., and XVI., with all their naïvetés, bergeries, chinoiseries, &c. The style "Cul de lampe aux vignettes vaporisées" is never likely to be much less popular in France than it is now, or than it was when Boucher, Vien, Vanloo, Le Clerc, Eisen, Marillier, Gravelot, and other charming artists brought it first into vogue. We, being a little wanting in the possession of such rich traditions of decorative excellence as the French possess, should but the more energetically exert ourselves to create something in the present which may supply the deficiency in the future. We have only to continue to improve in the next ten years as we have in the last ten years and the thing will be done.

We may now proceed to "take stock" of the remarkable revival which presents itself in the shape of mosaic work, an art for the general resumption of which I have long foreseen an almost inevitable necessity. For the last 20 years everything has been steadily tending in that direction. When I first visited Italy in the year 1845, carrying with me a strong sense of the kind of fruit which must grow from the seed I saw Welby Pugin, Eastlake, Dyce, and Owen Jones planting, I at once recognised in mosaic the special desideratum for our necessities in the art line, under the peculiar conditions of our abounding smoke and damp. On my return in the year 1847, at a meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects, I stated that I saw no reason

Its revival  
in England.

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whatever why we should not carry out in the various processes of mosaic "exactly what the Greeks and Latins practised of old." In 1862 I stated in the same room that "if I was justified in that remark in 1847, I am more than justified now; for, happily, many practical difficulties formerly existing have been removed, and convictions as to the eligibility of the revival entertained by a few then are now heartily sympathised with by many, able not to dream and desire only, but to work and to do." So strongly, indeed, is the current now setting in, that I feel convinced it will be ere long incumbent on every architect practising in the higher walks of the profession to make himself acquainted with the best mode of dealing with what, when once adopted, will, I do not doubt, become the most popular means of adding the graces of colour to the refinements of form and proportion. Mural painting must, in our climate, ever have to contend with elements certain to shorten its ephemeral beauty. If attempted in real fresco, damp, fog, and frost speedily fasten upon its very vitals, tending to set the lime against the oxides and other pigments, which in time are eaten away, as even in Italy we frequently see them, into nothingness. "Fresco secco" is still less permanent. Tempera, or distemper, I need not waste a word upon. Oil or encaustic painting involves the use of vehicles, darkening, turning yellow, shrinking irregularly, and ultimately often detaching themselves from the ground to which they are applied. What, then, is left to us if we would have our decorations live after we have ceased to live, but those processes over the most delicate and the boldest pictures produced by which experience has proved that a thousand years may pass and "steal no grace away"?

Its various processes.

Upon the nature, varieties, aspects, capabilities, and uses of these various processes, great confusion exists in the minds of the general public, and they are, indeed, well known only to a minority of those who will very shortly have to deal with them as everyday elements of decorative effect. It may therefore not be useless to enter upon this subject in some little detail historically, promising not to similarly commit myself in any other section of this report. Believing that it may be well to extend to a general auditory the information already given to a professional one, I do not hesitate to condense from a paper I read not long ago before the members of the Royal Institute of British Architects, a few particulars touching the main historical phases of pictorial mosaic, of revivals of almost all of which specimens may be seen in the International Exhibition. These I believe to have been the following seven:—viz., 1st, clas-

sical; 2nd, Latin; 3rd, Byzantine; 4th, Greco-Italian; 5th, Italian monumental; 6th, Italian portable; 7th, mosaic in MR. DIGBY  
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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c. *pietre dure.*

The first or classical is well known in its general aspect; I. The  
classical  
phase. but as the foundation of all the other styles, it demands a somewhat closer view; the more especially, I think, because this closer view may enable the architect to realize some distinctive features in ancient decoration revealed to us through no branch of art more distinctly than through mosaic. In the Roman decoration of Imperial times two distinct schools may be traced; the one most ancient—founded on Egyptian, Dorian, and Etruscan models—chiefly affecting monochrome combinations of black and red or buff, or delicately coloured subjects and ornaments on uniformly flat grounds; and the other rejoicing in the glowing tints and golden and spangled grounds of the East, popularized after the spoils of Ionian, Corinthian, Phœnician, and Syrian magnificence had given that taste for gorgeous costume which led to the substitution of the Babylonian embroidery and figured tissues in costume and wall hangings for the simpler stuffs indulged in during the Republican ages. Whether the art of fabricating gold ground mosaic was of Oriental discovery, or whether, as is more likely, it was derived from the north of Africa, the nursery of the glass and enamel trade, are as yet unsettled points; but that it was freely adopted in Imperial times is proved by the various specimens still existing at Pompeii and Naples. It is certainly curious to remark how devoted the ancients were to tessellation as a system, whether in the finest or coarsest examples. Large surfaces of uniform colour are invariably made up of small cubes, little varying in size in any portion of the work. No special labour is bestowed on fine joints, and no effort is made to disguise their effect by using coloured cement stoppings. The jointing was evidently accepted as an artistic convention, and with good taste and judgment it was kept regular, so as to prevent its distracting the eye from the pictured forms. Its lines were invariably made to subserve, by contrast, the effect of the flowing contours wrought by means of it; and no effort was made, by the use of large slabs combined with tesserae, to save the labour or expense consequent on reducing the whole to one uniform gauge of size or rectangularity. This reduction of all to a common modulus is one of the sources of that appearance of flatness and repose which peculiarly marks all well designed pictorial mosaic. Such regularity is infinitely more important than fineness of work. The best specimens of the value of this adherence to gauge over large plain surfaces with which I

Its leading  
subdivi-  
sions.

Original  
processes.

Appearance.

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Chief speci-  
mens.

Ultimate  
processes.

am acquainted are those noble black and white pavements and wall and vault linings which abounded in the baths of Caracalla, at Rome. To those familiar with such mosaics as those of the "Battle of Issus," from Pompeii; of Pliny's "Doves," in the museum of the Capitol at Rome; of the fine pavement found amidst the ruins of Hadrian's villa, at Tivoli, now in the Hall of Masks in the Vatican; of the splendid arabesques and head of Minerva brought from the site of Cicero's villa at Tusculum, and now in the Hall of the Greek Cross, it is needless to state that in all that constitutes perfection in graphic imitation the fine *opus vermiculatum* of the ancients left nothing to be desired. Not only were form represented by light and shade, and local hues expressed by positive colour, but the utmost refinement of gradation of warm and cool tones, in shadow tints and reflected lights, were accurately copied from nature. Even in that curious mosaic removed from the Temple of Fortune to the Barberini Palace at the ancient Præneste, now Palestrina, in which the learned have recognized the identical primitive specimen referred to by Pliny, in the words "Lithostrata cœptavere " sub Sylla æxtat quod in Fortunæ delubro Præneste fecit," a great variety of colouring and much minute execution in the animals, figures, and landscape are to be observed. For the production of such vivid and varied tints natural, self-coloured materials, such as marbles, stones, &c. could not suffice; and the skill of the glassworker was therefore pressed into service to enrich the mosaic worker's palate. For him not only were vitreous pastes prepared, glowing with every colour of the rainbow, but chemical processes for staining and tinting natural materials were brought into use; and, finally, the vitreous pastes were overlaid with gold, covered in its turn by a thin film of pure white glass, which effectually secured the metal surface from contact with noxious gases or damp vapours. Not content with applying his incrustation to plane surfaces, the mosaic worker learnt also to adapt it to the lining of domes and vaulting, as well as to the varied forms of basso-rilievo. In this country, among the Pembroke marbles at Wilton, we possess one of the few specimens known of this curious mosaic, which was at once sculpture and painting. Nor is it in such exceptional productions only that we are rich, since, in the more ordinary kinds of pictorial mosaic, in which figure subjects are combined with flowing and conventional ornament, the soil of this country has teemed with valuable relics of the Roman occupation of our island.

II. The  
Latin phase.

The second variety of pictorial mosaic may be designated as *Latin*, since it long retained the marked peculiarities of

style which distinguish Latin from Byzantine art. Thus, not in the choice of objects only, but in the retention of the ruddy flesh tints, the deep brown shadows, and the stumpy figures and simple costume of the decline of Roman painting, do such mosaics as those of the fifth century at Santa Sabina, Santa Maria Maggiore, and San Paolo Fuori delle Mura, at Rome, differ from later specimens executed at the same city, if not by Greeks alone at least by a preponderance of Greeks over the direct descendants of the original classical mosaicists. M. Barbet de Jouy, of the Louvre, who has profoundly studied the subject, remarks that "the mosaics executed "from the time of Constantine to the Pontificate of "Nicholas I. (A.D. 858) do not possess the Byzantine "character." This, though partially correct, is far too sweeping an assertion; it suffices, however, to show that the separation in classification of Latin from Byzantine style in mosaics is essential to preserve a correct idea of real, not fanciful, distinctions. The earliest Christian Latin mosaic known is that which lines the vaulting of the little baptistery of Santa Costanza, adjoining the basilica of St. Agnese, and dates from the age of Constantine. It would be extremely difficult to say which was the latest.

The more closely the matter is studied, the more evident it becomes that a distinct Latin influence in the history of art is to be traced running beside, mingling with, but never altogether losing its identity in, the great tide of progress which swept from a thousand springs and sources over the whole continent of mediæval Europe. Thus, amongst existing remains of the Middle Ages, we may point to three in particular, in which many of the Latin peculiarities of mosaic-working have been faithfully preserved to a comparatively late date: one in the north of Italy, and the other two in that district over which we may frequently recognise traces of the influence exercised by the long-flourishing Latin schools of Aix-la-Chapelle and Cologne. In the pavement of the cathedral at Novara, a work executed at intervals, probably between the beginning of the twelfth and the middle of the thirteenth centuries, we meet with a very fair reproduction of a black and white classical pavement. In various medallions are birds and allegorical figures, in some of which may be observed the coincidence which occurs between the tessellation of the Novara pavement and that of the ancient pavements of Pompeii, such as I have sought to reproduce in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. It is probable that a somewhat similar mosaic pavement, with figures representing Rhetoric, Logic, Prudence, &c. and a zodiac, was formerly in the Church of St. Irene, at Lyons.

Descended  
by tradition  
from the  
original  
classical.

Early speci-  
mens at  
Rome.

Late speci-  
mens at  
Novara.

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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

a city in the neighbourhood of which many fine classical mosaics existed which might have well served as models for this mediæval specimen of tessellation.

Ravenna. From observations and inquiries which I made at Ravenna in the autumn of 1865 I have every reason to believe that the ancient pavement of St. Vitale, now covered over by a second mosaic pavement at a much higher level, was both in work and subject analogous to the Lyons pavements, as well as to the one about to be noticed.

Omer. In the year 1831 extensive excavations, fully described in the work of M. Wallett, were commenced to uncover the crypt and choir of one of the ancient churches of St. Bertin, at St. Omer. These laid bare one of the most interesting monuments of art ever exhumed in France. A reference to the engravings in M. Wallett's work will show at once the nature of the pavement, which, represented by a regular classical tessellation of black, red, yellow, and bluish grey, executed in terra-cotta, stone, granite, and marble, the zodiac surrounding a square, divided diagonally by conventional ornament and containing three medallions and a monumental slab in the several triangles so spaced out. Of these the most interesting is the monumental slab which is covered by a figure of William, son of Robert, Count of Flanders.

Want of space does not permit of my dwelling in detail upon the workmanship of the medallions, which show a curious transition from the mosaic to the purely incised slab pavements; but I may be permitted to congratulate France and its archaeologists upon the fact that the date of 1108 wrought round the supine figure of Prince William leaves no doubt as to the retention at that period of workmen perfectly capable of imitating in mosaic the important fragments of classical mosaic which served, so far as processes of manufacture and ornament are concerned, as models for the execution of this precious work. The third rare specimen of mediæval Latin mosaic is the slab of Frumualdus, Bishop of

Arras.

Arras, found in the cathedral of St. Waast, at Arras, in 1835, and now preserved in the museum of that city. Frumualdus, who died in 1183, is represented standing, and in full episcopal costume. The details are worked out, as may be observed on an inspection of the elaborate coloured plate given in Gailhabaud's "Architecture et les Arts qui en " dependent," in tesserae, among which are many obviously gilt. One peculiarly classical feature, the retention of which would go far to prove a Latin rather than a Byzantine tradition for this work, is to be noticed in the strong black outlining of the figure. I am not aware of the existence of any later Latin tessellation than is shown in these three examples.

We come now to the third species, Byzantine mosaic, which includes all that was done in Greece and Asia Minor; and much that was done in Italy, from the transfer of the seat of empire in the year 399, until the Italians began to learn from the Greeks to practise the art for themselves.

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TION, &c.  
III. The  
Byzantine  
phase.

History tells us that Constantine took artificers to Constantinople with him skilled in all the arts of Rome; and hence we naturally find that the earliest Byzantine monuments can scarcely be distinguished from the classical; but the new soil and the old soil soon caused the same parent stock to bear very different fruits. Byzantium rose as Rome sank. No doubt a freer intercourse with the nations of the East, and more especially with Persia, soon led the Greeks to engraft enhanced brilliancy on their fading recollections of classical art; and gorgeousness in costume, in textile fabrics, in illuminated manuscripts, and in pictorial mosaic, soon usurped the foremost place, once assigned to severer sources of beautiful effect. In the pages of Hope, Lord Lindsay, Gally Knight, Von Quast, Salzenberg, and Ciampini detailed information will be found upon the productions of the Byzantine mosaic-workers. Suffice it now to say that it is in their earliest labours at Santo Sofia, at Constantinople, and in the churches of San Nazareo e Celso (the tomb of Galla Placidia,) San Vitale, and the two churches of San Apollinare di Fuori and Di Dentro, at Ravenna, that the finest models for our imitation are to be met with. Byzantine pictorial mosaic is exclusively upon gold ground; and there is ample evidence that, from the date of the commencement of the iconoclastic troubles in 742, when multitudes of Greek artists and monks were driven out by persecution to seek a precarious living in foreign countries, the staple of such work was invariably executed, and the necessary materials probably manufactured, by these itinerant mosaicists. What are to be peculiarly admired in the Byzantine interiors are the breadth of decorative effect invariably aimed at, the good proportioning of the scale of the pictures and ornaments to the distance from which they require to be viewed; the judicious use of bands, margins, and string courses to keep the compositions distinct and make them subservient to an architectural disposition; and the judgment with which they invariably accentuate or give emphasis to leading architectural features. For instance, nothing can be happier than the mode in which they almost always treated the soffits and faces of arches, and the arrêtes or salient angles of vaults. No arrangements of decorative form can be happier than such as exist in some of the cupolas

Mainly  
derived  
from the  
east.

Finest  
specimens at  
Constanti-  
nople.  
Ravenna.

Venice.

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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Rome.

of St. Mark's, at Venice, of which careful sections may be found in Kreutz's elaborate work.

Next to Constantinople and Ravenna, Rome certainly offers the noblest specimens of Greek work; done, probably, to a great extent, through the "Scuola Greca" established by Pope Adrian I., A.D. 782, and attached to the church of Santa Maria, in Cosmedino. As if to reward the patronage of the Pontiff, the great mosaic of Santa Pudenziana, done in his days, is by far the best in which the Greeks appear to have played the leading part. The mosaics executed at Rome for the next three centuries, although numerous and on a grand scale, exhibit, with the exception perhaps of those of Santa Prassede, a marked falling off. In those of the apse of San Clement, carried out early in the thirteenth century, a decided revival is manifested, destined to burn brightly for a short time only, being, as it were, almost the last shooting up of the already waning flame, which had for so many centuries shed a brilliant light from the capital of the Eastern empire far and wide over the continent of Europe.

IV. The  
Greco-  
Italian  
phase.

We now come to the fourth, or Greco-Italian, series, which are important on two accounts—firstly, because they illustrate a gradual emancipation from tradition in the limitation of subjects and action; and, secondly, because they constitute the transition which ended in the transfer of the art from one nationality peculiarly fitted to maintain technical efficiency to another not less qualified to graft pictorial excellence on mechanical precision and perfection. The first mosaics executed in Sicily—those of the Church of the Admiral and of the Capella Palatina at Palermo—bear Greek inscriptions and were wrought by Greeks; in the first exclusively, and in the second probably under the guidance, as to design, of Saracenic artists.

Finest speci-  
mens in  
Sicily.

For the later and far more extensive works at Monreale and Cefalu, the mixed races, protected under the Norman dominion, each contributed its quota of skill. The Duca di Serradifalco and Cicognara agree in recognising the influence exerted on Pisa by the advance made in Sicily; and, through Pisa, Sienna and Florence were unquestionably stimulated to rapid advance in art. The cathedral at Monreale offers, I believe, next to Santo Sofia, at Constantinople, and St. Mark's, at Venice, the noblest and grandest instance of a church decorated throughout with mosaic. Having drawn and studied hard in it for many a day from dawn to sunset, I can bear humble testimony to its invariable beauty under every changing condition of light and shade. Whether bathed in

sunshine and all alive with glowing colour, or, almost dark at closing day, retaining to the last some lingering gleam upon its gilded wall faces, its aspect is one, not of gaudiness nor gloom, but of serene and dignified magnificence. It is a subject of congratulation that these beautiful mosaics are so admirably rendered by colour-printing in the great work recently published by the Padre Gravina and the Benedictines under the auspices of the Italian Government. As in Sicily, so in Venice, the art was at first kept entirely in the hands of the Greeks, who not only worked at St. Mark's, but at Torcello and Murano as well. In the latter island they, no doubt, laid the foundation of the glass trade, previously a Constantinopolitan monopoly, so far as the more difficult branches of the manufacture were concerned. From the Murano glass houses, from the Scuola Greca, at Rome, and from a manufactory established at Palermo, as well as by direct importation from Greece, the materials were supplied with which the Greco-Italian mosaics were executed. The profits made by the itinerant Greeks in Italy, coupled with an increased demand for works of decoration consequent on the wealth accumulated by the northern Republics through trade gains, soon caused an attempt to be made by the Italians to break up the Byzantine monopoly.

The success of this attempt led to the development of the fifth species of pictorial mosaic, which I have designated "Italian monumental." It was in Florence, early in the thirteenth century, that the transfer of the monopoly was consummated. Andrea Tafi, a Florentine, having insinuated himself into the confidence of certain Greeks working on St. Mark's, at Venice, prevailed at last, as Vasari says, "Con "preghi, con danari, e con promesse," on a certain Apollonius to go to Florence and work with him upon the mosaics which still line the vault in the baptistery in that city. A rival of Andrea was the even more celebrated Mino da Turrita, who, having gained an earlier, although probably less accurate, knowledge of the Greek processes, preceded Andrea in working on the baptistery. Subsequently Gaddo Gaddi was employed as an assistant on these works; and by these artists, and by their pupils, and pupils' pupils, almost all the pictorial mosaics subsequently executed in Italy were carried out. Among such may be specially noticed, as combining fine execution and decorative colour with really good art, the splendid apse linings of San Giovanni Laterano and Santa Maria Maggiore, at Rome, executed by Mino da Turrita and Gaddo Gaddi, by the latter of whom Giotto's celebrated "Navicella," at St. Peter's, was also wrought.

and in  
Venice.v. The  
Italian mo-  
numental  
phase at  
Florence,and at  
Rome.

MR. DIGBY  
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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Its Mediae-  
val,

Renaiss-  
sance,

and modern  
stages.

VI. The  
Italian  
portable  
phase.

So highly did the Italians esteem the products of Andrea's combined talent and cunning that after his death they honoured him with the following epitaph :—

Qui giace Andrea, ch'opre leggiadre e belle  
Fece in tutta Toscana, ed ora e ite  
A far vago le regne delle stelle.

Pietro Cavallini and the Cosmati subsequently obtained reputation by their mosaic, principally at Rome, the latter working in the Gothic manner altogether. I have every reason to believe that the Greeks continued to labour at Venice long after their services were dispensed with in other cities of Italy, although after 1400 A.D. I think the work at St. Mark's to have been altogether Italian. With the uprising of the great school of fresco-painting, the employment of mosaic, a far more costly decoration, was to a great extent dispensed with, although at Pisa, Orvieto, Sienna, and Rome both styles of mural embellishments are constantly to be seen together. Their union, however, is not to be admired, owing to their unequal durability—the permanence of the colour of the one frequently making needlessly conspicuous the fading or staining of the other. The best early Renaissance monumental mosaics with which I am acquainted are those from the designs of Raphael in the Capella Chigiana, in Santa Maria del Popolo (illustrated in colour by Mr. Gruner), and the vault of a subterranean chapel in Santa Croce in Giriusalemme, at Rome, the design of which is attributed to Baldassare Peruzzi. The best late Renaissance mosaics on a grand scale are unquestionably the magnificent decorations of the vast cupola and pendentives of St. Peter's—models which one would fain see rivalled, not slavishly imitated, in our great metropolitan cathedral. For the production of the Papal mosaics a *fabrica*, or Government establishment, was founded, which has not failed, up to the present time, in providing materials and labourers equal to the repair of old and the initiation of new work, equal in all respects to, and surpassing in some, the peculiarities of each style we have hitherto noticed.

A few words will suffice to dismiss the sixth species of mosaic, which I have called "Italian portable." By this term I would convey that the basis of the variety is not so much making portable mosaics, as, from the great weight of the materials, they can never be made easily portable; but rather making reproductions, in mosaic, of pictures in oil or other media, which may be really and readily transferable from place to place. This species is, in fact, little else than a revival of the fine *opus vermiculatum* of the

ancients. It would be incorrect to say that the Greeks did not ever manufacture miniature mosaic pictures, because two fine specimens exist to my knowledge — one at Florence, and the other, of extraordinary perfection and curiosity, in the Kensington Museum ; but it may be safely averred, from the great rarity of such relics, that the practice was altogether exceptional. This, indeed, is not to be wondered at, since, with the quick-drying cement ordinarily used for mosaic-work, it must have been extremely difficult to execute these almost microscopic pictures, which bring within the compass of a few square inches subjects usually worked out in as many square feet.

This leads us to the conclusion that the ancients, for their finest mosaic pictures, must have used some retarding agent, such as honey or beer would prove, to keep their cement plastic longer than it would remain if mixed with water only. When, however, Giovanni Baptista Callandria applied, early in the seventeenth century, a mastic in lieu of an ordinary hydrate of lime to unite the tesserae, it became comparatively easy to copy the most elaborate pictures in mosaic. By this artist was executed the beautiful reproduction of Guido's St. Michael, which, with Raphael's "Transfiguration," and Domenichino's "St. Jerome," is about the best of all the celebrated mosaic pictures in St. Peter's.

In the marble incrustation which forms our seventh species, and which is best known as Florentine mosaic, the tints and shades are given by the natural colours of the jasper, agates, and other precious materials of which the work is composed. The hardest minerals only are used ; and, as each small piece must be cut and ground to a pattern, and each thin veneer backed by a thicker one of slate, or some such material, in order to give it strength, so much labour and time are involved in the production of this kind of mosaic that its high price has necessarily limited its use. Zobi, the principal writer on the art of *pietra dura* mosaic, tells us that he knows of "no existing example in Italy of marble pictorial mosaic executed during the first periods of the revival of the arts, except the specimen to be seen in the central nave of Sienna Cathedral, said to be the work of Duccio di Buoninsegna, who lived in the fourteenth century." There can be no doubt, however, that the art was founded on the *opus sectile* of the ancients, and that it descended by regular tradition from classical times. I need scarcely recall to your recollection the extraordinary advance made in the pavement of the same cathedral upon the work of Buoninsegna, by that great master of the sixteenth century, Beccafumi. The art was lavishly patronized by the Medici. The

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Miniature  
specimens at  
Florence :—  
in South  
Kensington  
Museum—

and on a  
larger scale  
at Rome.

VII. Mosaic  
in "pietra  
dura."

Founded on  
the "opus  
sectile" of  
the ancients.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Under the  
Medici.

In the East.

The first  
six phases  
pictorial  
by aggrega-  
tion of  
uniformly  
coloured  
parts.

In the  
seventh  
nature  
paints as  
well.

The present  
eclectic  
revival.

In Italy.

celebrated Fabrica Ducale of Florence was founded by Ferdinand I., Grand Duke of Tuscany, in 1558; and its reputation during the seventeenth century was kept up by the exertions of those artists to whom Florence owes the finest specimens of mosaic which enrich her palaces and galleries, and whose names are for the most part given to us by Baldinucci. Before taking leave of this subject we must not omit to notice the exquisite specimens produced in India of pictorial mosaics, representing the finest arabesque and conventional ornament in *pietra dura*. That the Indians were early in possession of all the technical ability necessary for such work is proved by the antiquity of some of their gem-cuttings, inlaying, polishing, and carvings in hard stones; but it is probable that their Sovereigns owed much to Italy for assistance in that beautiful arabesque-work which ornaments the great monuments at Delhi and Agra; for in 1688 a passport was obtained from the King of Spain, by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, for four workmen skilled in mosaic working in precious stones, whom he was about to dispatch to the Great Mogul.

Such being the whole of the varieties of mosaic which have heretofore prevailed, it behoves us to see in what relation the present stands to the past. To facilitate the student's just exhaustion of the problem, it will be well for him to group as one the first six varieties, and to consider the seventh separately, their being this fundamental difference between the first six and the seventh—that whereas in every one of the first six the whole of the pictorial effect is dependent on the aggregation of coloured particles, each particle being of a uniform, even colour; in the seventh, nature supplies variously coloured and tinted substances of extraordinary hardness and durability, which the mosaicist selects and shapes so as to represent the various lights and shades and local colours, not in an even intensity only, but in all the gradations and variations which characterise the objects he endeavours to pourtray minutely. The style of modern mosaic decoration may in general terms be designated as an eclectic revival of all the styles of the past, and we shall now briefly take stock of the condition of the art as at present practised by the principal nations of Europe, and as illustrated by the products of the International Exhibition.

As great parent of the art, it is but just to Italy to give her precedence. Fortunately, the tendency of the Roman Catholic Church has been eminently conservative; and to her honourable desire to uphold and repair her "ancient "fanes" we are indebted for the preservation of the tradi-

tions and practice of mosaic making and working upon a grand scale. Attached to three of her principal shrines have long been schools where the mosaic-worker has been reared and employed, at the charge of the State or Church, to repair the splendid mosaics of St. Mark's, at Venice, San Benedetto, at Monreale, in Sicily; and St. Peter's and other sublime structures at Rome. These State establishments are not directly represented in the present Exhibition, but their influence is perceptible even in their absence. It is a hopeful sign for Italy that what was long a hothouse plant only is now showing itself as "a hardy annual," and private enterprise is carving out for itself an honourable path scarcely to be trodden by any Governmental institution. To Signor Salviati, of Venice, the great honour will always accrue of having given this vigorous impulse to a branch of industry which seemed to be dying out from inanition in his native city. It is always satisfactory to find such efforts as those which Signor Salviati has made duly appreciated, and it is pleasant to read the terms in which they were spoken of by the Royal Commission of members of the Venetian Academy of Fine Arts appointed in 1861 to examine and report to Government upon Signor Salviati's establishment. They report \* that they "found that the drawings executed by Signor Salviati's order, and serving as guides in the manufacture of the mosaics and of the intaglios of his establishment revealed the best possible taste, being well and artistically done. They have no suggestions to offer as to their improvement, and they cherish the conviction that a man who has already sacrificed personal interests, tranquillity, and time; who has abandoned a liberal profession securing to him a distinguished and honoured position in the country; who spends large sums of money and makes long journeys for the sake of introducing improvements; who, unassisted, and not in the possession of a very large capital, has founded an establishment increasing every day in importance, and who gives bread and work to so many artisans, requires no additional stimulus to spur him on in his task. His own intelligence, his own disinterestedness, and the love and the care which he has devoted to this new undertaking, are the best guarantees for his future improvement and for his continual progress."

This "continual progress" Salviati has well maintained up to the present time, as is abundantly testified both by his His great merits and success

\* "Di un nuovo stabilimento patrio di mosaici, &c., relazione di B Cecchetti. Venezia, 1861."

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works executed in this country and by his samples shown in the French Exhibition, which are in every style, from the close imitation of nature in works such as his portrait of Prince Albert, to the regular conventionalities of the Greek saints, reproduced from models in St. Mark's. I shall have occasion to return to Signor Salviati's labours in speaking of the progress of pictorial mosaics as an element of decoration in England. One of Salviati's great merits has consisted in his generous appreciation of the talents and experience of old Lorenzo Radi, the glass-worker of Murano, in whose person the traditional mysteries of "smalto" making, partially revealed to us by Neri,\* seemed concentrated, and on the point of perishing with the old man's death. Now, fortunately, through Radi's nephew, Giovanni Albertini, and Salviati these processes are fully preserved, improved upon, and worked (as I had occasion to observe in a recent visit to Murano) upon a really great commercial scale.

While Venice is thus flourishing in a revival of this good old art, Rome is showing some signs of life in the extension of what is commonly known as Roman mosaic (*i.e.*, a reproduction of the *opus vermiculatum* of the ancients), from paper weights and table tops, to which its application (with the exceptions to my knowledge only of some very good pilasters in the villa Borghese and some few attempts in the villa Torloniana at Rome) has hitherto been limited to chimney-pieces and similar portions of domestic structures. In the exhibition of the Papal States this year there is shown a very pretty marble chimney-piece decorated with these mosaics from designs by E. Salandri, of London, who has lately shown me several clever "projects" for similar works, which he is anxious to import into this country.

Through  
Salandri.

At St.  
Peters-  
burgh.

As an important offshoot from Rome we have next to consider an establishment which, but for its being "Imperial," and therefore "hors concours," would unquestionably have received the highest honours any jury could have conferred. I allude to the Imperial glassworks of St. Petersburg, under the especial patronage of Prince Garkarin, and presided over by Signor Bonafede, the favourite pupil of the celebrated Chevalier Barbetti, the mosaicist, of Rome. What the French would call a splendid "gamme" of coloured "smalti" for the execution of mosaics exhibited by this establishment in 1862 received the warmest commendation from the jury, of which I was a member on that occasion, and was subsequently presented to the Department of Science and Art by the Emperor of Russia. The present Exhibition shows

\* "De Arte Vitrariâ."

advance rather than falling off, and unquestionably the best pictorial mosaic of all in the building is a colossal one, executed with "smalti" from this establishment, by F. Bouroukin, M. Mouraviev, and G. Agavonov, from a picture by Professor Neff. It represents a group of saints, and for breadth of effect and simplicity of execution leaves nothing to be desired. It is intended to form a portion of the internal decoration of the great Protestant church of St. Peter, at St. Petersburg, a structure of great size, the general design of which is creditable to its architect, C. Tatzky. This mosaic is essentially pictorial in its freedom from conventional restraints of any kind, and is so beautiful as to form, to my mind, a perfect model of what a pictorial mosaic adapted for harmonising with architecture of the nineteenth century should be.

In France there are no great signs of life in the revival In France. of the art of pictorial mosaic. It is true that in the year X. of the Republic the authorities founded an establishment in rivalry with the "Fabrica Papale," under the charge of a Signor Belloni, for teaching French workmen to make mosaics, "all' uso di Roma," but it never flourished; and, whether in the original establishment, the old college of Navarre, in the Rue de la Montagne, St. Germain, or in the Rue des Cordeliers, to which Belloni ultimately removed, little was done, and the manufacture was never other than a short-lived exotic. Sèvres this year shows a few specimens of revived ecclesiastical pictorial mosaic, which suffice to show, what nobody in his senses would doubt, that the French could make excellent mosaics if they were so minded; but at present it is clear that the architects have neither taken it up nor have the public demanded it as a decorative adjunct for churches or domestic structures, as we have already begun to do. A Commission has, however, recently been given to Salviati to execute a series of medallions, representing tragic and comic masks, &c., for the decoration of the new grand opera house at Paris. These I have seen in progress at Venice, and admirable they certainly are.

This brings us to England, where matters now stand in a most hopeful position; and it may be well to trace a few of the steps by which that hopeful state has been attained.

The revival of mosaic in this country as an architectural adjunct may be considered to have begun in 1839-40, about which time Mr. Blashfield endeavoured to produce decorative pavements by means of inlaid asphalte, coloured cement, and Venetian pisé works, aided by the clever inventions of Mr. Singer, of Vauxhall; by his ingenious assistant,

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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Through  
Bonafede,  
Neff, Boura-  
kin, and  
others.

Its early  
stages,

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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Mr. Pether ; and also by Mr. Prosser's mode of producing a tile of great density and closeness of texture, by subjecting powdered China clay to strong mechanical pressure in iron moulds, and in this way obviating the shrinking caused by evaporation which is unavoidable when the clay is used in a moist state. Mr. Prosser's invention was first applied to the manufacture of buttons, in which for some time a large trade was carried on. Recently Messrs. Maw have invented a process by which they obtain tesserae with the close texture and consequent hard surface only to be obtained by aqueous shrinkage, and hitherto only approached by subjecting the materials to extraordinary pressure. The best specimen extant of Mr. Singer's work is the pavement of the hall of the Reform Club.

through  
Minton.

Owen Jones.

Blashfield.

Maw.

Mr. Minton, I believe, at the suggestion of Mr. Blashfield, turned his attention to the application of Mr. Prosser's patents to the production of tesserae suitable for the formation of pavements similar to those of the ancients. Many beautiful geometrical combinations for this purpose were suggested by Mr. Owen Jones, and the result of Mr. Minton's spirited efforts was the speedy introduction to the market of excellent tesserae in all colours.

In 1844, when I went abroad to study my profession, Mr. Blashfield gave me a commission to obtain for him anything which I considered likely to render these tesserae (the manufacture of which Mr. Minton had then just entered upon) of more general utility. In Italy and Sicily I found much material, of which I believed little notice had at that time been taken ; and this induced me to make a series of drawings, which I afterwards published in "The Geometrical Mosaics of the Middle Ages." These drawings were shown to Mr. Minton by Mr. Blashfield ; and on my return to England, in 1847, Mr. Minton applied to me to assist him in his views with respect to encaustic tiles, and their combination with tessellated work in general. For some time I rendered him what aid I could, and, but for other and more pressing professional engagements, I should probably have continued to do so. On Mr. Minton's retirement from active business, Messrs. Maw & Co., determining to add the execution of mosaic to their encaustic tile manufacture, sought my co-operation, which has been given, at such intervals as have suited our mutual convenience, up to the present time. Feeling their strength quite equal to the production of pictorial as well as geometrical mosaic, Messrs. Maw requested me, on the announcement of the intended Exhibition of 1862, to design a pavement of that character for them. This I did to the best of my ability ; and the

work, which included large heads of the four seasons in conventional framework, was exhibited and favourably received by the public. It is now to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, where, as the first completed specimen upon any considerable scale of a pictorial mosaic executed in England, it is not without interest. Whatever its defects may be as compared with later works, there is no doubt that by its execution its manufacturers fully proved their capability to rival any antique mosaic yet exhumed in this country. To have attempted successfully such an experiment, involving the production of an indefinite number of tesserae of about 100 different tints, many never previously got up in England, and the application of skilled labour as it had never before, I believe, been employed in this country since the last Roman quitted it, was, I do not hesitate to say, highly honourable to them as manufacturers ; and it is a source of gratification to me to have been associated with them in this, the first, practical endeavour to revive pictorial mosaic amongst us. Concurrently with Messrs. Maw, other manufacturers began to turn their attention to the production of materials for the execution of mosaic ; and Messrs. Powell & Co., of White-friars, Messrs. Minton, and Messrs. Jesse Rust & Co., in- stituted exceedingly interesting and successful experiments. Messrs. Simpson & Sons, the London agents to Messrs. Maw, also experimented upon the operations of cutting, making up, and backing, &c. ; while Signor Salviati, who had been invited by Mr. Penrose to aid him in the projected mosaics for the pendentives, &c., of the dome of St. Paul's, was led to seek employment in this country, which he has readily found, and to a great and, I trust, remunerative extent.

The officials of South Kensington took up the matter from an educational as well as from a practical point of view ; and attempts have been successfully made in their schools to instruct female students in the practical execution of mosaics from cartoons made by masters in the school and eminent artists who were employed by the department to make cartoons upon an extensive scale—in the first place, for filling up the great series of recesses along the Cromwell-road front of the picture galleries of the International Exhibition of 1862 ; and, in the second, for the numerous panels on the upper level of the interior walls of the museum of the department. The first of these projects failed, mainly from the unfavourable reception the buildings in question received from the public ; but the second is in process of realisation, and the present Exhibition contains two full-size figures which will take the place (after the close of the

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TION, &c.

Powell.  
Rust, &c.

Simpson.

Works at  
South Ken-  
sington.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

As shown in  
the present  
Exhibition.

Exhibition) of the models from which they have been taken, and which occupy temporarily the niches the mosaics will ultimately fill. The panels in question represent respectively Phidias and Fra Angelico. The former has been translated into mosaic by Messrs. Powell & Co., from a painting by Mr. Poynter; and the latter by Messrs Minton, after a picture by Mr. Cope. Having had an opportunity before the mosaics were sent to Paris of comparing them with the originals, I can attest the perfect success of the transcription, both in form and colour. Mr. Cole, of the Department of Science and Art, as an old and intimate friend and helper of Herbert Minton, has, to my personal knowledge, incessantly stimulated all concerned in bringing forward this elegant and permanent decoration, and has with zealous care brought together, and displayed in the section of the South Kensington Museum devoted to architecture and building contrivances, everything calculated to assist the student who would desire to make himself acquainted with the materials available in the present, and the best models of the past.

Employ-  
ment of  
Salviati in  
England.

It is satisfactory to be able to feel that Salviati's best works have been executed from designs and cartoons by English artists. The works he has executed for her Majesty at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, for St. Paul's, London, and for Westminster Abbey, are all in this category; and Messrs. Clayton and Bell's cartoon for the reredos of the last-named building was highly commended and rewarded by my jury. It is scarcely necessary to add that Salviati was also justly and fully appreciated by the jury, as were the honourable exertions of South Kensington.

Suggestions  
as to re-  
vivals.

Such being the actual condition of the manufacture at the present moment, I think it will be admitted that it is really incumbent on the studious architect (and in a minor degree on the art-loving public) to endeavour to grasp the theory of the right application of pictorial mosaic; and it is in the endeavour to aid him and them by my experience that I venture to reproduce a few convictions on the subject, at which I arrived some time ago, and in which I am confirmed by all I have seen in the present Exhibition.

The combined action of the moisture and severe frost of any northern climate is such as must always, I fear, render but little durable any extensive application of mosaic in small tesserae as external decorations. To a great extent, therefore, architects will have to look upon it as an internal, or at any rate, a protected embellishment. It is, of course, a coloured incrustation applicable to any structural surfaces which it may be desirable to enrich; and its appropriate

The theory  
of mosaics.

design may be strictly determined by very nearly the same laws which should govern the distribution of polychromatic decoration, executed through any other medium upon similar surfaces. The rationale of these laws has been by no one better illustrated than by Sir Charles Eastlake in his invaluable reports to the Fine-Art Commission; and it is better that I should refer to what he has so well written in those documents, than attempt to give now any paraphrase of them. The chief exceptional conditions are, firstly, the expense of mosaic, which entails simplicity; secondly, the extremely vivid way in which it reflects light and exhibits local colour partially, demanding judgment to adapt the design to the mode of lighting; and thirdly, its limitations, under ordinary circumstances, as a means of artistic expression, which lead to the prudent avoidance or sparing employment of many of those pictorial elements, such as perspective, foreshortening, lively action, or complicated chiaroscuro, which are proper and agreeable sources of effect in mural paintings executed with more tractable vehicles. That which the designer will probably at first feel to be his greatest difficulty, the arrangement of the cement joints which attach the tesserae to one another, will, when once he has mastered the principles upon which they should be disposed, prove a ready and most essential means of heightening his effects. The jointing is to a mosaic designer exactly what the lines and reticulations of an engraving or etching are to an engraver: and the rules of taste which apply to the one apply equally to the other. For instance, as the engraver's lines, by convexity or concavity, express the undulations of drapery and the modelling of surfaces advancing to, or retreating from, or above or below the spectator's eye, so precisely should the directions of the jointing of a piece of pictorial mosaic. Again, as the regular ruling or cross-hatching of an engraved half-tint is made to give value to the broken lights and shades of the leading figures, to which, by their vivid contrasts, attention has to be attracted, so should the uniformity of the jointing with even-sized tesserae diminish the brilliancy of a mosaic background, breaking up the light which would otherwise be so strongly reflected from, say, a white or golden background, as to quite kill the effect of the figures or ornaments to be relieved upon it. Another point which should be carefully attended to in arranging the jointing is to allow a row of tesserae of the same colour as the ground to always follow every leading contour profiled upon the background. The use of this rule, which was invariably followed by all good mosaicists, is to prevent the directions of the generally horizontal and vertical

Its limita-  
tions.

Its scope.

Jointing.

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jointing lines of the background from cutting awkwardly against the profiles, which the eye should be allowed to follow without being led off into other channels or distracted by the occurrence of irregularly-shaped tesserae next to leading forms. This re-duplication, as it were, of mosaic outline, has almost the effect of the lead-line in stained glass, and is not much less essential to good effect. It is highly gratifying to observe the degree of judgment with which the mosaicist has emphasised the designer's intention by a judicious treatment of the jointing in the Russian, Salviati's, and the South Kensington specimens now exhibited. It is always to be remembered that at the distance from the eye at which mosaics are usually likely to be placed mechanical defects disappear, but that artistic mistakes betray themselves, despite the most perfect mechanical execution. Hence it is far better to spend time, thought, and money in getting really first-rate cartoons than in endeavouring to bring the tesserae to fine joints or microscopic minuteness. In mounting to the summit of the great dome of St. Peter's glimpses are caught from time to time of the nature of the mosaic work; and the observer who, from below, may have fancied the whole to have been wrought with great exactness, will find that the work is of the coarsest description, with joints in which often a good sized pencil might be laid. Owing to its judicious design, however, the effect of the whole is eminently satisfactory when viewed from the floor of the cathedral.

It may be well to remember also that although mosaic is, as it were, painting, it is something more in its relation to the structure it decorates—it has become "bone of its "bone;" and, in virtue of its intimate and permanent union, is especially bound to live in peace and harmony. As a good wife should make conspicuous the virtues of the husband she adorns, should enhance his virtues, and screen his defects, so should a well-devised system of mosaic give, by predominant vertical lines, height to a structure in which height is wanting; and, by predominant horizontal lines, length where length is needed. Brilliancy may be wrought out of darkness by allowing gold grounds and luminous colours to prevail: while the eye in another building, "faint with excess of light," may be refreshed by a preponderance of cool, deep, and quiet tones. Stringcourses and borders, archivolts and imposts, bands and friezes, should be treated as permanent frames to permanent pictures, essential, by their rectangularity or other simple geometrical character, to afford the eye a ready means of testing all adjoining and more complex forms by contrast. Need I say that where the skeleton of the picture's composition is tossed

Need of  
really good  
artists for  
cartoons.

Principles  
on which it  
should be  
designed.

about in lively action a stronger boundary of more vivid and contrasted hues must inclose it as a corrective than when the motive power of the picture is of a quieter and simpler structure? That is the reason why the great Venetian pictures demand such massive framing, while the more serene compositions of the early Florentine and Siennese schools look best when separated one from another by little else than narrow bands of flat and softly-tinted ornaments. In the same way in mosaic the rigid saints of the early Byzantine school, with their evenly-balanced limbs and perpendicular draperies, need little else than vertical palm-trees, or inscriptions, or upright staves placed between them, to keep them architectonic; while the later corresponding figures of the Italian school, with their swaying lines, require often actual insertion into recesses to keep them even reasonably quiet.

Such are a few of the most important theoretical points which have occurred to me, but there are other and more abstruse details to be mastered before perfect success can be achieved, but upon these I cannot with propriety enter in this report. Such are those which arise out of the different artistic conventions which form graduated stages between the crudest mode of, as it were, symbolising nature and the most highly-perfected form of imitative art. While an intimate acquaintance with the specific conditions of each of these stages—which are to the designer what keys are to the musical composer—will be a great assistance to the mosaicist, an ignorance of or an indifference to them will lead him into great trouble and confusion.

With respect to specific style as affecting pictorial mosaic a few words remain to be added. We have seen that, as a decorative art applicable to monumental structures, it has survived every fluctuation and vicissitude which have affected architecture from the Christian epoch to our own time; as certainly will it outlive the little differences which split our architects up into Goths and Greeks—“big-and-little-endians” of the professional golden eggs. We have begun now to introduce a new element into our national art, and, happily, one which may, with precedent, and therefore with a good conscience by those who lean heavily on precedent, be used alike in buildings of whatever historic style we may any of us peculiarly affect. Let me, then, express a hope that it may not be considered necessary to retain the defects and mannerism either of too much or too little academic knowledge peculiar to ancient, mediæval, or modern times, but that we may rather concur in doing the very best we any of us can with this art without pedantry or a slavish deference to the past. The whole history of monumental and indus-

Necessity  
for special  
study of  
“conven-  
tions.”

Adaptation  
to specific  
styles.

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trial art has shown us that never is perfection attained in any product in which the material conditions and the processes by which those conditions may be best enhanced and developed, have not formed the basis of the theory of construction, manufacture, or application of any such product. This has held good of glass, stone, wood, marble, and of all the metals ; and assured am I that, if we are to make this art of pictorial mosaic a credit to the nineteenth century, a similarly "objective" spirit must also direct and determine the specific mode in which, under every varying condition of style and historical association of ideas, we would endeavour to rival the great masters of old in their use of this time-honoured embellishment.

Revivals of  
"pietra  
dura"  
mosaic in  
Italy.

England.  
France.  
England.

M. de Tri-  
queti's fine  
works.

Before leaving altogether the subject of mosaic, it remains only to notice very briefly the other section of the art, in which Nature is herself made to turn painter to help the mosaicist to his effects. In this style the Exhibition includes not many competitors of importance. The chief are M. de Triqueti, the Royal (formerly grand ducal) manufactory of mosaic in *pietra dura*, of Florence ; the Imperial establishment for work of a somewhat similar kind at Peterhof, Russia ; Betti, Barzanti, and Rinaldelli, of Florence ; and the Englishman Birley, of Ashford, in Derbyshire.

M. de Triqueti, the well-known sculptor, author of the "Marmor Homericum," Mr. Grote's gift to the London University College, displays in the section of fine arts four large panels in what he calls "Tarsia de Marbre." In some respects this assimilates to the well-known pavement of the cathedral at Sienna, and forms, in fact, pictures in which local colour is represented by slabs of variously-tinted marbles, and form, by hatchings filled in with black or other coloured cements. The process admits obviously of a highly-conventionalised treatment of subject only. The effect produced is novel, and, owing to the great merit of the artist, interesting ; but, to my taste, the mechanical difficulties to be overcome are too great to permit of adequate pictorial representation. What is given is either too much or too little for what is wanting, and there is an inadequate balance between the expression of colour and that of form. This insufficiency is scarcely felt when such a process is applied on a small scale to the elaboration of conventional ornament, or even of arabesque, introducing figures, &c., as it was occasionally in monuments and commemorative tablets by the sculptors of the early Italian Renaissance ; but in highly-dramatic themes, portrayed in life size, the picture in its perfect gradations, if not in full intensity, of light, and shade, and colour, is so essential to convey expression to the mind of the spectator,

and to enable him, as it were, to identify himself with the scene, that no resource of the painter's art can be spared. To produce pictorial effect in "tarsia de marbre" appears to me so difficult as to make one say, with the well-known epigrammist, "would it were impossible." In this particular instance M. de Triqueti has shown himself at all points the accomplished artist he is well known to be; and if he fails by such a process to charm who is likely to succeed? at any rate in works of so ambitious a character.

M. de Triqueti's great mosaics (for mosaics they undoubtedly are) consist of four very large plaques or tablets with accompanying pilasters, and will form part of the wall lining of the Wolsey Chapel at Windsor, dedicated to the memory of Prince Albert by Her Majesty the Queen, serving as complements to the splendid gold-ground mosaics by Salviati, specimens of which are to be seen in the Italian department. They represent respectively—1, Moses blessing the people of Israel, the approach of his death, and his delivery of the Pentateuch to the Levites; 2, David composing his psalms under the divine "afflatus;" 3, Daniel in the lions' den; 4. Nathaniel under the fig-tree. The subjects of the pilasters are analogous.

For the  
Wolsey  
Chapel,  
Windsor.

Thus it will be seen that their aim is the loftiest possible; Their aim. and it is but just to say that, in dignity of style, the design and execution are irreproachable. My criticism is directed, not against the artist or his work, but solely against the method as available for the expression of such subjects. For fear that on so important a work my views should appear prejudiced or unjust, it is but fair to let the author describe the process in his own words:—

"These bas-reliefs," he states, "have been executed by Their pro-  
cess. an entirely new process, and the ornamental framework which surrounds them is no less novel. They are composed of different marbles planted on a base also of marble. The drawing and modelling of the figures are given by deep incisions, which are filled up with a coloured cement which adheres perfectly to the marble, with which it is of equal hardness—so equal, indeed, that the same process of polishing is applicable to both. The colours employed in tinting the cements are, from their very nature, permanent. The whole is thus calculated to last, without change, until destroyed by accident or wilful intent. Its inventor proposes to designate this new branch of art 'tarsia de 'marbre,' as reproducing in its general aspect the Italian 'tarsias' ('intarsia'), executed in wood in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, although the new style differs from the well-known old one in the materials and

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process of manufacture, as well as in the results obtained. It also differs from the works in the cathedral at Sienna, the pavement of which is executed with the aid of similar incisions, filled in with a black resinous mastic, the use of which was speedily abandoned on account of its want of durability. It is also without local colour, and has never been employed for mural decoration. The cutting out of the ornaments in marbles of different colours which compose the borders has never been previously attempted on a large scale for want of any mechanical contrivance which could bring down the price of such work sufficiently to justify its use for the decoration of great buildings. The borders now exhibited show that this problem has been resolved from henceforward. Corresponding work executed at Florence on the old system has hitherto cost enormous sums, and its use has for that reason been so restricted as to scarcely exist in any but the most exceptional cases."

Works from  
the Royal  
manufac-  
tories at  
Florence.

Although there is room for many observations on this manifesto, this is scarcely the place to enter upon them; I would simply point out the works as well repaying careful study. I pass therefore to a consideration of the products of the Royal, formerly grand ducal, *fabrica* of mosaic in *pietre dure* at Florence. So far as mechanical execution is concerned, the old perfection is maintained in what is now shown; but the labour is to the art as a mountain to a molehill. Its chief specimens in the present Exhibition consist of a landscape representing the tomb of Cecilia Metella, at Rome, a picture of the Last Supper, a statuette of Dante, in which the draperies, &c. are all represented in natural colours cut out in the very hardest stones (gems, in fact) possible. In all these the jury regretted that the original models were not worthy of the infinite skill, patience, ingenuity, and great outlay necessary to the elaboration of the finished products.

At St.  
Peters-  
burgh.

In comparing these samples with those forwarded from the Russian imperial establishment of Peterhof, it was felt that the artistic direction of the latter exhibited a juster apprehension of the legitimate capabilities of mosaic "en pierres dures." Although, perhaps, a little overdone with gilded mountings, the splendid "Armoires," inlaid with the choicest lapis lazuli and with raised fruits and flowers, did great credit to M. Jafimovitch, the director of the manufactory. In close examination of the precious materials in which these mosaics were executed, one could not fail to be struck with the beautiful subdued pink tint of the rhodonite, a colour unattainable, so far as I know, in any other substance. The selection of specimens of lapis lazuli fringed with white vein-

ing to represent the petals of some panzies, constituted a "luxe" beyond a "luxe" in this princely "vanity." On a larger scale, the working of some of these precious materials (jaspers and rhodonite) at the Imperial establishment at Ekaterinbourg received the warmest admiration from the jury, both on account of the elegance of the forms and the splendid size and purity of the samples of rare and most costly minerals.

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WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

At Ekater-  
inbourg.

If one cannot but trace some falling off in the good taste which should preside over such an establishment as that of the Royal Florentine manufactory of mosaic in *pietre dure*, it is gratifying to have occasion to observe that this decadence has in nowise extended to the independent producers of a somewhat similar class of goods in Florence. Many very good samples of the usual imitations of flowers, &c., inlaid in black marble for table tops and cabinets, are contributed by various Florentine manufacturers, amongst whom the jury specially noted the houses of Barzanti, Betti, and Rinaldini. In the same class of goods the table top exhibited by our solitary producer in the same line, Mr. Samuel Birley, of Ashford, Derbyshire, was much admired. Observations were, however, made upon the inequality of scale in which the centre group of flowers and the surrounding wreath had been worked out.

From  
Florence  
generally.

By Birley of  
England.

Before passing in this report to other special miscellaneous branches of "decorative work," it may be well to notice an institution, the golden fruits of which are sufficiently manifest throughout the British section, and which are, in fact, of no mean importance, not only as making up the present goodly show, but as pregnant with promise for the future of British industrial art.

Special  
exhibits  
in many  
classes of  
decoration

There is probably no exhibitor in the whole building whose contributions are so difficult to classify as are those which appear collectively under the name of the Department of Science and Art, South Kensington. The various items so appearing correspond not ill with the all-embracing title of the department, and one is somewhat at a loss to determine whether they are most interesting under their utilitarian and scientific, or their artistic aspect. When they were first brought under the notice of the juries of classes 14 and 15, supposed to take cognisance, respectively, of furniture and decoration, but which actually worked together, as I have before said, as one jury, an inclination was felt to remit each item or sets of items to other classes, to which they appeared to refer specially—as certain specimens of terra-cotta work, to the jury for ceramics; certain other terra-cotta work, the bronze door, &c. to civil engineering and building con-

by the De-  
partment of  
Science and  
Art.

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WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Which was  
excluded  
from re-  
ward.

Its general  
influence as  
teacher.

Works pro-  
duced under  
its auspices.

trivances ; and the mosaics to the class for vitreous manufactures, or, possibly, to the last named but one. On reflection, however, there appeared to be running through them all so manifest a decorative "strain" and intention that it was felt that that intention demanded distinct recognition on our parts ; and, if it failed to receive it from us, we did not see that it would be likely to receive its due commendation under its general aspect from the jury of any other class. It was, accordingly, determined to recommend the department for a gold medal, which would indubitably have been conferred, had it not been determined to place all exhibits proceeding from manufactories or departments supported by national funds out of the competition altogether. This exclusion from reward in nowise nullifies or abates merit, and leaves the duty still upon the reporter of justifying the favourable opinion entertained and expressed by the jury. In the case of what (for brevity) we may designate as South Kensington, the first debt of gratitude, on the part of all lovers of art, was felt to the institution from an educational point of view. Its influence, directly and indirectly, as a teacher was felt to pervade the decorative aspect of the whole of the British section. The first result of such teaching, the multiplication of draughtsmen, or, at any rate, of persons capable of understanding the various graphic processes alone, has gone far to supply what, ten years ago even, was a "crying" deficiency in England. The operation of the central and often itinerant museums, in which the artist, the workman, and the general public may freely examine and draw from the choicest examples of the industry of the past, has proved at least equally beneficial. The organization of the system of reproduction of the best models by the cheapest possible plaster casts, photographs, galvano-plastic processes, chromo and photo lithography (of which a charming series of specimens was exhibited on the present occasion) has extended the benefits of the museum to the very homes and workshops of the student. This system has been much appreciated on the Continent ; and in the Austrian and other departments signs may be recognised of the inauguration of similar systems, leading, no doubt, to an international exchange of good models, calculated to advance the general interests of art and industry in the highest degree.

Setting aside, for the present the question of the extent to which it may be good policy for a State to produce works of art on its own account simply to serve as models for imitation by private enterprise, there can be no doubt that to take advantage of the necessity for the construction of adequate galleries and buildings for the department to give

an impetus by State aid to the national arts of construction is both justifiable and laudable. It is in this direction, apparently, that the officers of the department have been labouring zealously and with a good measure of success. In speaking of terra-cotta, faience, enamel, and mosaics, I have already taken occasion to allude to the success of the department's exhibits, and I think there remains only to notice specially the fine bronze door (destined to form the entrance-door to the museum), which will long bear its testimony to the rare talents of poor Godfrey Sykes. Had it pleased God to endow him with a frame as robust as his imagination was fertile and his hand well trained, he would, I cannot doubt, have originated a series of monuments of art-industry which would have been treasured at home and would have done us infinite credit abroad. The doors in question constitute a fine and original work, presenting us with a series of figures in high relief of the worthies of art-industry, each standing in a somewhat severe architectural framework. They have been skilfully carried out in the galvano-plastic or electrotype process by Franchi of London (in whose name they are exhibited), from the general design left by Godfrey Sykes, and executed after his death by his assistants, John Gamble and Reuben Townroe.

We (and indeed it is a prevalent bad habit in most countries) are too apt to speak and think generically of things we understand imperfectly, forgetting that endless variety may exist in each genus, and "we not know it." Thus, we speak of any monumental crosses as "Eleanor crosses," whereas Eleanor crosses are but varieties in a genus. So many will speak and think only of Mr. Sykes' production as a "Ghiberti door," while, in fact, the two will have nothing whatever in common except the facts that both are doors and both are made in metal. The design is different *to-to-cælo*; the process of fabrication is different, the style is different; and one might as justly accuse Ghiberti of plagiarism because his bronze doors followed and rivalled that of Andrea Pisano, as accuse Mr. Sykes of want of individuality because Ghiberti and many others had preceded him in the same road. The truth being, that Mr. Sykes' work was really produced in emulation of the beautiful, but unfortunately incomplete, designs for a "monumental door" made some 20 years ago by his old friend and master in decorative art, Alfred Stevens. Anyhow, the door in question will be the first of its kind in England, so that South Kensington may be congratulated upon obtaining novelty as well as beauty in this specimen.

Godfrey  
Sykes' bronze door.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

General up-  
holstery in  
France.

England.

Switzerland.

Belgium.

Prussia.

Hesse.

Furniture  
in precious  
stones and  
materials.

Algerian  
onyx.

I pass now to various miscellaneous sections comprised in Class 15, reserving for a finale some general observations upon "furniture, ornaments, and decorations for the services of the Church."

In general upholstery, including "bed furniture, stuffed "chairs, canopies, curtains, tapestry, and other hangings," the present Exhibition contains in no department any great quantity of novelty. Much which was commended by the jury of 1862 is equally commendable now; but it would be needless repetition to dwell long upon what is good, but generally perfectly well known—such, in France, as the "sommiers Tuckers;" the excellent upholstery of Bruseaux and Co., and of Mdme. Veuve Brag, the hangings of Mathevon Bouvard, of Lyons, the chairs of Jeanselme, the marqueteries of Marcelin, the porcelain inlay of Rivart, the portable iron furniture of Tronchon, the stamped leather of Dulud, and ornamental leadwork of Monduit and Bechet; such, in England, as the beds and bedding of Heal and Co., the chairs of Ingledew, the brass bedsteads of Winfield, of Birmingham, the picture-frames of Rowley, of Manchester, the slateworks of Magnus, the japanning of Bettridge, the stained pine bed-room fittings of Dyer and Watts, and the curtains of J. and J. S. Templeton, of Glasgow; such in Switzerland, as the parquets of Wirth and Muller Bridell; such, in Austria, as the bent wood furniture of Thonét; such, in Belgium, as the chimney-pieces of Leclercq and Mellot, and the parquerterie of Tasson and Dekyn: in Prussia, as the frames of Voeltykow and Bürges, and the parquets of Peters and Klemm; or in Hesse, as the parquets of Nussmann and Bimbét. Of all such houses and products it may suffice to say, that all exhibit in excellent form the current goods, the perfect qualities of which have established the reputations of those firms for what they manufacture.

Foremost amongst the makers of objects of furniture in precious stones and materials, other than those already noticed, should certainly be placed the "Société des Marbres d'Onyx d'Algérie," carried on under the general and commercial direction of M. Viot, and under the artistic guidance of M. Cornu. For perfect execution, the happiest appreciation of the decorative uses to which objects in such precious materials can be applied, for judicious combination of those materials with metal and other mountings, and indeed, for general successful results, this beautiful display was at once considered worthy of the highest ordinary distinction the jury could award to it. As even more perfect than the Algerian onyx-works, I certainly hold the exquisite

cabinet specimens of jade, rock-crystal, &c., forming the Guthrie collection, exhibited through Messrs. Phillips Brothers, of Cockspur Street, London. These works, however, not being exhibited by their manufacturers, could be admired, as they certainly were, but could not be brought under any conditions which could justify the award of a prize for them, at any rate in our class. The beautiful mosaics of precious stones, inlaid at Agra, &c. and forming chess-table tops, inkstands, &c., were also admired by the jury of Class 15, but felt to be scarcely within its province. Amongst other exhibitors of good work in precious, or at any rate exceedingly intractable, materials, the jury specially noticed the porphyry vases, &c. wrought at the usine of Mdme. Arborelius, at Mora Elfdalen, in Sweden, and the masterly treatment of Scotch granites by the well-known firm of M'Donald and Field. In softer but yet precious materials, such as marbles, &c., quantities of well-wrought chimney-pieces are exhibited, such as those of Geruzet, for the Pyrenean marbles, Becq, for other French marbles, and Leclercq, Willemotte, Crocquet, Courbain, Melot, and Louvencourt for those of Belgium.

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WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.  
—  
Guthrie  
gems.

Agra inlays.

Swedish  
porphyry,  
Scotch  
granite,  
French and  
Belgian  
marbles.

Respecting "moulded objects, and ornaments in plaster, " statuary, pasteboard, &c." there is not much to be said. All the various processes of reproduction by the use of elastic moulds are now so thoroughly and generally understood that every nation alike seems to employ them with almost equal facility and dexterity. From an educational point of view, the plaster casts of portions of great architectural monuments displayed by the Department of Science and Art are most important, and next, probably to these, from the same point of view, are the small specimens contributed from the Government School of Design of Vienna. In the manufacture of carton-pierre and plaster work, on the system patented by M. Desachy, under the auspices of Mr. Owen Jones, France certainly "carries off the golden apples," both for excellence and commercial development of the manufacture.

Objects  
produced by  
plasticity.

Plaster  
casts.

Carton-  
pierre.

The well-known houses of Crapoix and Hubert maintain their well-won leads, and are closely followed by Messrs. Jackson and Sons, of London. The English and French in this particular do not quite compete on equal grounds, for, while the French products have, for the most part, been chased-up by most skilful carvers, the English works are exhibited almost exactly as they have left the moulds. In this respect the French have taken, as I consider, no undue liberty, since it was, of course, open to Mr. Jackson to have worked up his goods to the same high degree of surface,

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ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Picture  
frames.

finish, and undercutting. He preferred, however, to exhibit the products of his manufacture as they currently issue from his factory.

Amongst the “frames” there is a general average of excellence in the production of gilt frames amongst the leading nations of Europe. The French, English, and Austrian appeared to me to be the best, and the Bavarian, Belgian, and Prussian the cheapest. In carved frames, with perhaps, the solitary exception of one forwarded by the Society of Arts in London—which obtained special approbation in their last competition for prizes for skilled workmanship—Italy had it, I consider, “all her own way.” The frame carved in walnut-wood from designs by Giusti, of Sienna, and some smaller specimens by Frullini and others were admirable, and in all respects constituted commendable works of art. Rowley, of Manchester, was specially noticed as a maker of thoroughly good ordinary picture frames, at moderate prices. The frames of several of the Prussian houses were considered to be extraordinary, for the prices at which they were quoted.

Painted  
decoration.

Of painted decoration, the Palace of the Exposition contains but little shown as specimens by individual exhibitors, but the brush has been freely applied ornamentally to garnish the stands and inclosures which separate the products of the various nationalities—upon the whole, I think, most successfully in Italy. Turkey, in this respect, narrowly escapes being very good ; and Germany has sought safety in a series of her usual half tints and neutrals, which scarcely sufficiently “furnish up” to the goods to which the walls, &c. serve as backgrounds. In Russia, it is to be regretted that the paint-pot has been allowed to spoil a quantity of admirable woodwork, which, simply stained or varnished, would have told its own tale, and looked exceedingly well. Because the French have not exhibited “decorative painting” in force, it is not to be inferred that they are wanting either in heads to design or hands to execute every class of such work. Paris itself—not in its great monuments only, but in every street, and almost in every café—is overflowing with protests against the injustice of any such supposition. Outside the walls of the Exposition she is stronger in her display of this class of work than within it. In the pavilion of the Empress, in the kiosk for the Pacha of Egypt, in the Sultan’s cabinet, and in many other works for all sorts of nationalities she has “lent a good hand,” especially through the talents of MM. Dieterle, père et fils, Prignot, and Parville, artists and designers of the most distinguished merit. In reporting upon the class of paper-

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TION, &c.

hangings, I may, however, have occasion to dwell in greater detail upon this branch of my subject; meanwhile, should any sceptic doubt the French superiority in this department of art, let him only spend an hour or two attentively in the gallery of industrial designs and he will, I think, leave it a convert.

On that important section of class 15, furniture, ornaments, and decorations for the services of the church, a whole volume might, of course, be readily written. As our limits are not of any such capacity, the remarks now to be made must be condensed within far too narrow a compass for the interest and gravity of the subject. To the visitor to the Exhibition it presents itself under two leading and distinct phases—viz., what is the present position of the various European nations in relation to church furniture and decoration, and what evidence does the Exhibition contain and afford of progress, or the reverse. Some time ago a broad distinction might have been made between the furniture, ornaments, and decorations intended for the services of the Roman Catholic and for those of the Reformed Churches respectively; but at the present moment such distinctions have been all but obliterated. It is indeed singular that some amongst the most costly decorations for ecclesiastical structures—such, for instance, as the magnificent Russian mosaics, those in *pietra dura* by de Triqueti, and the bulk of those exhibited by Dr. Salviati—should be intended for buildings in which Protestant rites are performed. In all countries alike the revival has been rather archæological than ritualistic in its origin, whatever it may be now; a spirit of conservatism for ancient monuments arose early in the present century, and embraced, of course, by way of reaction, most energetically those ecclesiastical structures which had most suffered, through revolution in France and Italy and general indifference in other countries, during the eighteenth century. The study of the monuments of ancient and national architecture speedily induced a corresponding study and fondness for the preservation of relics of ancient industries, and gradually the study led on to a desire for the reproduction of such relics, and ultimately for the reintroduction into general industry of the processes, and even of the forms specially affected at different historic periods. Thus, in every country, general industry has been enriched by the revival of many, until lately, dormant, if not extinct, arts and processes, and the equipments of the Church have correspondingly benefited. Still parallel with this revival, which naturally assumed a mediæval shape, there has existed, if not flourished, a style of church furnish-

Furniture and decora-  
tion for the  
church.

Increasing  
“luxe” in  
the celebra-  
tion of  
religious  
rites.

A revival  
which began  
archæologi-  
cally, and  
has become  
ritualistic.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Chief la-  
bourers in  
the archaeo-  
logical re-  
vival in  
France.

And in the  
ritualistic.

The move-  
ment not  
congenial to  
the French  
workman.

ing which has descended to our days from the exuberant wealth and flourishing condition of the Roman Catholic Church under the stimulating system of the Jesuits. The style to which I allude was "rococo" in the highest degree, and was the perfect embodiment of the maximum of drawing with the minimum of thinking; rich and florid, it rejoiced in broken and twisted scroll and shell work, ribbons, clouds, saints, aureoles, cherubs, skeletons, emblems, rays of light, and even flashes of lightning. At the beginning of the present century scarcely any church plate, furniture, or decoration of any sort of pretension was executed in any other style. In France the labours of enthusiastic archæologists, such as Albert Lenoir, E. H. Langlois, the Comte de Pourtales, Willemin, Sauvageot, Du Sommerard père, De la Queriere, Laborde, de Bruges, and Jubinal, stirred up the country to something better, and attempts were at first almost furtively made to smuggle into the sacristies of the principal cathedrals something more in consonance with the rare treasures of the mediaeval period, which were still preserved in a fragmentary state at the backs of cupboards and in neglected drawers, than the motley incongruities to which allusion has been made. To these pioneers succeeded other supporters of "Romanticism," as it was stigmatised in the early days of Louis Philippe, when Victor Hugo, Dumas, Balzac, Soulié, the Bibliophile Jacob, and Sue, emancipated literature and the belles lettres from the fetters of academical tradition. France must ever lie under a deep debt of gratitude to those who have helped to confer grace and comeliness, reason and propriety, upon the revival of such national arts of the Middle Ages as might be made available for giving a fitting character of dignity and solemnity to the equipments of the restored monuments of her ancient faith. Among such may be classed conspicuously during the last 30 years, De Caumont, the Abbé Texier, the Pères Martin and Cahier, the Vicomte de Cussy, de Merimée, Rio, Questel, Lassus, Didron, Gerente, Lasteyrie, Du Sommerard fils, Maurice Ardent, Courmont, Labarte, Ferdinand Serée, and, "last, not least," Viollet le Duc. On all sides in the present Exhibition indications are given of technical dexterity in these revivals, but yet it is impossible to feel that they are other than exotics. There is an obvious want of spontaneity in the attempt of the art-workman of the Faubourg St. Antoine to carve or paint, or wield the hammer and the pliers, as the men of old did, under the active supervision of a Church which once swayed the wills and views, the hopes and fears, of labouring men, and held them bound under as potent spells as do now the tyrannies of trade

associations, and the mysteries of secret societies maintained in spite of law and reason for keeping alive the smouldering embers of red republicanism—with a curious undercurrent of Fourierism. How can a Church which has so far lost its hold upon the lives and consciences of those who can alone furnish forth its pomps and ceremonies expect a manifestation now of that real devotional spirit which characterised the old triumphs of ecclesiastical art and devotion?

Both on the occasion of this and of the last preceding great Exhibition, I could not but become cognisant of the fact that the prevalent English idea of mediæval art is not acceptable to, or partly perhaps accepted by, the most accomplished critics of other countries. With much of what we produce in church furniture and decoration, and regard as fulfilling the true mediæval theory of art, they find fault because the work done fails to precisely recall the details of the remains of church furniture and decoration which they have most minutely studied. Thus in Germany the popular idea of mediæval architecture is concentrated (except, perhaps, in the theories of Herr Reichensperger and his school, which is a very small one) in the angularities and crinkled conceits of Erwin von Steinbach, Martin Roriczer, and Adam Krafft. In that style great quantities of church furniture and decoration still exist in Germany, and models suitable for exact reproduction abound. In England the case is very different. The iconoclasts of our Reformation did their work much more effectually, and left behind them but scanty evidence of the characteristics of the furniture and decorations which once adorned the structures they defaced, but could scarcely destroy. Hence it was comparatively easy for the English to reconstruct mediæval architecture proper (and in that we have been fairly successful), and difficult to provide consistent *instrumenta ecclesiastica*. The difficulty has been greatly increased by our predilection for early pointed Gothic architecture, remains of the decorative adjuncts of which are even scarcer than those of the later styles, and of which fewer representations exist in illuminated manuscripts. Such adjuncts the English have, therefore, been compelled to a great extent to invent; and foreigners, not being well acquainted with the types upon which we have sought to reconstruct, fail to recognize the correctness and propriety of the reconstruction. In other words, they appear to admit frankly the beauties of mediæval design as a thing of the past. Conceding this in the present, why they would preserve every vestige of it in a wholesome spirit of conservatism, and go even so far in restoration as to destroy with great cost and pains what they aim at pre-

The English  
form of re-  
vival or  
“develop-  
ment” re-  
pugnant to  
foreigners  
generally.

In Germany.

Why

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WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

In France.

Now.

serving; but as for the future of mediæval design, except as a blind reproduction, they fail to recognize or adopt it. For them it does not appear to possess such elements as justify its re-creation as a living style, intolerant of, and predominating over all others; such, in fact, as it would become if our English "development" theorists were permitted full scope. I am fully aware that one illustrious name in France—that of Viollet le Duc—passes current as an ægis for dogmatism on this subject; but those who would so use it can have but a poor notion of the breadth of that great writer's view, and the ample spirit of tolerance which distinguishes his practice. As he says, in an eloquent passage of the "résumé his-  
" torique" of his "Dictionnaire Raisonné du Mobilier  
" Français," "Nous sommes dans le temps des innovations  
" en toutes choses : mais nous *inventorions le passé, parce que*  
" *nous sentons qu'il nous échappe.*" And again, "Pour con-  
" clure, nous ne pretendons pas que la connaissance exacte  
" des choses et des habitudes du moyen âge donne du talent  
" aux artistes de notre temps qui n'ont pu en acquérir; mais  
" nous sommes convaincu qu'elle doit aider l'homme habile et  
" familier avec les ressources de son art." . . . "Nous ne  
" pretendons pas qu'il faille, au milieu du dix-neuvième siècle  
" s'entourer de meubles copiés sur ceux qui nous sont laissés  
" par le moyen âge. Et s'il paraît ridicule aujourd'hui de  
" voir une femme en robe bouffante assise sur un fauteuil  
" imité d'un siège grec, il ne l'est guère moins de placer dans  
" un salon une chaise de quelque Seigneur du quinzième  
" siècle. Ce que nous voudrions, c'est une harmonie parfaite  
" entre l'architecture, le mobilier, les vêtements et les usages.  
" . . . Le signe le plus certain d'une civilisation avancée  
" c'est l'harmonie entre les mœurs, les divers expressions de  
" l'art et les produits de l'industrie."

(Viollet le  
Duc rather  
archæologi-  
cal than  
ritualistic.)

The licence M. le Duc would thus freely accord to the equipments of our residences he would wisely and justly limit and draw tighter around the furniture and decorations of the church of the 19th century. Thus he would regard as abuses of the highest importance, when affecting ecclesiastical proprieties, slips of good judgment, and taste, which would be trivial only when committed by an individual. Ever since (he says) "a reaction has taken possession of us with respect  
" the arts of the Middle Ages, we have begun to fill our  
" churches with furniture, 'soi-disant gothique,' ridiculous in  
" form, unsatisfactory both in material and execution, and  
" possessing no other merit than rapid perishability." Would I could add that much which I have seen here and there scattered about in England only possessed this last-mentioned quality in the highest degree. Anyhow, certain it is that

neither in 1862 nor in 1867 could any amount of arguing or persuasion induce the foreign jurors, generally, to look with satisfaction upon the forms of mediævality into which we had cast the bulk of our furniture and equipments for the service of the church. They would persistently maintain, firstly, that they were not beautiful; secondly, that they were not like any remains of mediæval ages they had ever seen; and thirdly, that in point of workmanship they were below the level of the best objects in other styles. In too many cases it was impossible to deny, conscientiously, that the strictures were just. The unfavourable impression made by the Ecclesiastical Society's collection of "exhibits," to which obviously none but the "very pure" had been admitted, may be illustrated by the following passage from the report of the Belgian Commissioner to his Government in 1863:—

"L'ex-  
" position d'ameublements et d'objets divers en style du  
" moyen âge, organisée par les soins de la Société Archæo-  
" logique fournit encore d'autres exemples tout aussi frap-  
" pants (de mauvais goût); mais ici c'est peut-être à l'esprit  
" de système qu'on doit les singularités qu'on observe. Il  
" existe une école qui semble entourer de son amour non  
" seulement tout ce qui nous a été transmis par le moyen  
" âge mais surtout ce qu'il a produit de plus naïf et de plus  
" barbare." While frankly acknowledging that a spirit of pedantry is more often exhibited in such goods than a spirit of beauty, an Englishman must wilfully shut his eyes who would refuse to recognize how large an influence for good has been exercised over even the nooks and corners of our native land—its village churches no less than its cathedrals—by those who have, by language sometimes a little over-harsh and contemptuous, roused us up from our lethargy, and shaken the old spirit of churchwardenism out of our drowsy constitutions. While Pugin specially addressed himself to revival for the sake of the Roman Catholic Church, the Cambridge Camden (ultimately the Ecclesiastical) Society applied itself to the same task for the Anglican. With equal vigour, and, one might possibly add, with equal intemperance, both preached the soundest doctrine, in the most strident voice. Perhaps for great diseases harsh remedies were necessary; but now that the medicine has operated and the patient is better, he should forget the shaking up he received when he was awakened to the necessity of taking his draught. Because he may be better, it does not follow that he may be yet quite well; and there is still, I think, a wide field of action left for bodies such as the Council of the Architectural Museum, who might, if they would, greatly assist the good cause by directing the active energies of the art-workmen

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

In Belgium.  
Now.

Influence  
A. W. Pugin  
on the  
Roman  
Catholic  
and of the  
Cambridge  
Camden  
Society on  
the Angli-  
can Church.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Rapid ac-  
quisition of  
power to  
reproduce  
medieval  
architecture  
satisfac-  
torily in  
England.

Action of  
the Arundel  
Society on  
the art  
element of  
the move-  
ment.

into the groove of beauty, and by keeping them away from the much easier courses of quaintness and eccentricity. Knowing, as all architects must know, how much behindhand we were, ~~only~~ some 25 years ago, in everything connected with the production of decent furniture, ornaments, and decoration for the services of the Church, due allowance should be made for any shortcomings which may still manifest themselves; remembering, at the same time, how much safer it is to recognize them, in order that they may be amended, than to shut our eyes to them and believe that we are "all "right," and our contemporaries on the Continent all wrong. There will be found to remain, after making all reasonable and requisite allowance for drawbacks, abundant evidence of skill and capability on the part of designers and draughtsmen, makers and employers, buyers and sellers of ecclesiastical equipments of all kinds; and as compared with similar classes in any other country of Europe, we have little reason to fear invidious comparison. It would be, I think, unjust to a very active and very useful body to put upon record any impressions of the rapid advance made in England towards the revival of decent and artistic decoration for the offices of the Church without adverting to the service rendered to the good cause by the persistent labours of the Arundel Society. Instituted in the year 1830, in a noble spirit of conservatism, the governing body of this society has converted its efforts to do honour to the past into a powerful form of leverage upon the present. By sedulously putting before the artistic world careful transcripts of some of the most beautiful applications of art to the services of the Church in mediæval days, and in those of the Renaissance in Italy, they have supplied models which have proved of singular efficacy in preparing the way for practical revivals of similar good works, through the various media of wall and ceiling painting, stained glass, mosaic, engraving, illuminating, carving, &c. in this country of late years. It is true that, for a time, their labours were misapprehended, and that they were supposed to travel in too restricted an orbit; but as time rolled on, and men's minds turned seriously to the practical question of how to do now what great masters of old had done well in their days, a more just appreciation of the value of such models arose; and of late years the field of the society's operations has been greatly enlarged, as is evidenced by the form in which they now present themselves in a friendly alliance with the Department of Science and Art. In speaking of this society and its labours, shortly after the close of the last Parisian Exposition I gave expression to anticipations (in the following terms) which it is delightful to find have been fully and satisfactorily

realized, and the fruits of which are now to be seen in many departments of the British section. I then remarked, in addressing a public meeting at the Crystal Palace :—" I cannot conclude without expressing my earnest hope that you will not carry away the impression that studies of an archæological nature and the carrying out of objects such as this society has attempted are without their practical importance in this generation. Any glass-painter, or wall-painter, or any artist occupied with sculpture in any material, must gain a great deal from a study of the frescoes and ivories reproduced by the society. They will, in the first place, see how important it is to endeavour to stamp their works with a legitimate connection with each other, and to give them that dramatic interest which is indispensable to command the emotions of the beholder. A single picture, separated and isolated, cannot, of course, represent a course of action or take cognizance of circumstances which may have preceded or followed the moment selected for representation ; but, in a series, that connection of incident can be indicated which converts art from a lyric into an epic, and gives it an all-powerful and moving influence over the popular mind.

" Again, any artist who will study these works will find that whenever the simple expression of any natural emotion or any tender sensation has been honestly carried out, everybody must be struck with the power of it, and will be ready to overlook almost any amount of technical imperfection. Further, they give us an interesting illustration of a very difficult practical question which is every day presenting itself—namely, how far it may be possible to unite with truth and sentiment a just sufficient amount of archaism in form to connect itself without jarring upon our senses with the mediæval style which, in modern works of that character, we are bound to preserve and carry out ? They show us that a mode of mural decoration may be used which shall express all needful qualities of thought and feeling, and shall yet assimilate by its peculiar angularities to an early style of architecture without shocking the feelings by any gross want of drawing or absence of human emotion and character. A very little addition, by way of correction, to the design of these frescoes is quite as much as the eye can desire, which wants rather to see the subject of the picture and the thought of the painter than to ascertain whether the work is well executed mechanically and with what amount of dexterity. It is not by attempting on all occasions to put Raffaelle where Raffaelle ought not to be that we can obtain those effects which neither Raffaelle nor Giotto ever aimed at without realising."

In various  
branches of  
industry.Especially  
in adapting  
the past to  
the present.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

The revival  
in Belgium;  
tribute to  
three  
Englishmen  
King, Philp,  
and Weale.

After France and England, there is no country of Europe in which a greater effort has been made to emancipate the Church from the old Jesuit rococo style, which even yet prevails too much, and to substitute for it something in better keeping with the noble old mediæval monuments of the land than Belgium; and it is gratifying to notice how largely this improvement has been assisted by the knowledge and labours of three Englishmen. The names of Messrs. King, Philp, and Weale will at once occur to the recollection of all who have watched the Belgian movement with interest. The first named has dedicated himself to the illustration of, and the furnishing of models for the reproduction of mediæval ecclesiastical buildings and furniture, from the largest structure to the smallest specimen of goldsmiths' work. The second has conducted practically a manufactory in which the old Belgian "dinanderie" or latten work has been admirably and economically reproduced; and the third is acknowledged to be the most ardent, if not the most learned, writer on Belgian archaeology. He was the ruling and moving spirit in the formation and illustration of the beautiful exhibition of church furniture, &c. ancient and modern, which took place at Mechlin in 1864, and which for the first time revealed to public admiration the treasures long hidden in the out-of-the-way churches of Belgium, and especially the masterpieces of that Cellini of the early thirteenth century, Hugo d'Oignies.

The revival  
in Spain.

In Spain the spirit of conservatism of ancient monuments of all kinds has been rapidly increasing of late years; but, unfortunately, wars, pronunciamientos, and individual peculation have left comparatively few models to serve as the basis for any great change in church furniture and decoration. In Russia a more active spirit is alive, and the Government, in nourishing the national spirit, nourishes with it much external grandeur and dignity in everything associated with the peculiar national church. In Italy the exigencies of the State limit expenditure upon ecclesiastical decoration. What is done, however, is generally upon a magnificent scale, and in a noble if somewhat impure and overloaded style.

Having thus generalised upon the relative positions of the various European nations in relation to church furniture, ornaments, and decoration, it may be well to point out briefly what the Exhibition contains most noteworthy in this department. Attention has been already paid to the mosaics, which are the principal novelty on the present occasion. Commencing with France, the ecclesiastical student may be directed to a structure in the park, which it is scarcely less than an insult to the present state of architectural knowledge

In Russia  
and in Italy.

The revival  
now shown  
in the Exhi-  
bition in  
France.

in that country to call a church or chapel. It is filled throughout with altars, fonts, pulpits, retables, grilles, images, lamps, "corona lucis," plate, vestments, hangings, sacristy fittings, &c.; and not only are these objects less favourably displayed than they were in 1855, but they are for the most part of inferior quality. The best object is, I think, the massive corona lucis by Poussielgue Rusand, which hangs in the middle of the chapel. Bonet père has a tolerable stone altar, as has also Olivier. Grados shows skill as a zinc-worker, and the difficulties of bossing and shaping are well got over. Several of the great ironfounders, as Ducel and Durenne, exhibit grilles, &c.; but rarely in satisfactory designs for the material, cast iron, which never looks well when it assimilates too closely in style of design to wrought iron. Upon the whole, the French cannot be congratulated upon their exhibition in this section.

I have already indicated the aspect under which our mediæval work generally appeared to the majority of my jury. The only "exhibits" which met with much commendation were some of the excellent wrought-iron work by Messrs. Hart and Sons, of London, and by Messrs. Barnard and Bishop, of Norwich. Mr. Skidmore's clever work failed to please, as did, in different ways, much church furniture and decoration, which meets with ready sale and much encouragement in England, such as forms the current production of houses in that special line—those, for instance, of Messrs. Cox and Co., Jones and Willis, Frank Smith, Heaton, Butler, and Bayne, O'Connor, &c. The cartoon for the mosaic of the Last Supper, destined for the reredos of the Westminster Abbey altar, prepared by Messrs. Clayton and Bell for execution by Salviati, was warmly and justly commended. A small piece of furniture, executed from designs by Mr. Charles Foster Hayward, was admired; but with that exception, and with that of others already mentioned, I am bound to confess that but little of our ecclesiastical and mediæval work met with any other than very "faint praise."

In the Belgian department, the great pulpit, by Goyers, of Louvain, was held to be good for its money, as, in the Dutch, was that of Cuypers, of Amsterdam; in both, however, it was felt that errors had been committed in too much imitating in wood architectural forms, parts, and proportions special to stone. In this particular a very favourable contrast was held to be shown in a very pretty "priedieu" in the Austrian department, executed by Leimer, of Vienna, and in one or two of the cases and portable shrines shown in the Bavarian section.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Good me-  
diæval lead  
work in  
France.

Summing  
up.  
General  
signs of  
progress in  
France.

The best church works in the whole Exhibition were considered to be some of the admirable reproductions of mediæval lead ornamentation by Monduit and Bechét, of Paris, and the general precious metal work of Thierry, Rusand, Skidmore, and Bachelier. As all of this will, no doubt, be more properly estimated by reporters on other classes, it may suffice here to simply indicate its general excellence.

To sum up the general impressions I have derived from a close inspection of the whole Exhibition, as to the relative progress in the arts of decoration made by each nation since the last universal Exhibition, I may state advisedly that I look upon the advance made by England as the most rapid and meritorious of all. France, on her own ground, is master of the position, so far as the universality of "esprit" in every branch of production is concerned. Her artists are most dexterous and prolific, but stand frequently in need of correction when their exuberant fancies lead them into trivialities. On all sides in her beautiful Exhibition, there is evidence of the danger which besets the too ready hand, which runs away as it were, with its possessor. Because an artist can "touch "off" a wreath of flowers with enviable facility, there is no reason that we should be "smothered with roses" on all occasions. All that France needs now is greater chastity of taste and more elegant simplicity; in richness she is without a rival.

**In England.** England manifests signal improvement rather in the suppression of the violently bad than in the achievement of perfect success in what is absolutely good. What our industry still shows the want of is workmen who can paint and model with tolerable facility. In decorative painting in artificial keys and scales, as "en camaieu," "en grisaille," "rehaussé "d'or et divers métaux," &c., and in cabinet sculpture, the French training of the workman, and especially his comparative sobriety, give him a great advantage over the corresponding class in England, and the national products show it. Still, both design and execution in all branches in both countries are much better than they were, and an average good quality is infinitely better sustained than it used to be, even half a dozen years ago.

**In Austria.** In Germany, Austria has advanced more than Prussia; since the former country shows much less of that extravagant rococo or bad imitation of Louis Quinze work, than she used to delight in; and the latter has acquired a certain stiff ungainliness, of average good intention, and has apparently lost much of the more refined classicality which Schinkel and his school brought into vogue. In Bavaria, Holland, and

Of retro-  
gression in  
Prussia,  
Bavaria,

Belgium there are signs of retrogression. Russia is much where she was, and the other northern nations are rather improving. Italy is becoming more showy in style, but with certain exceptions remains less true to her old traditions of excellence.

Happily, India is still the glorious old India all true artists have learnt to venerate; and it is amidst her treasures and those of other Oriental nations that more inspiration is to be acquired than elsewhere in this grand and unrivalled gathering of the nations. Let us hope that British working bees will visit the great hive in thousands and come back "laden with "honeyed spoils" to enrich and benefit themselves and the industrial arts of their native land.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON DECORA-  
TION, &c.

Holland,  
and Bel-  
gium.  
Italy, doubt-  
ful, but  
India still  
the true and  
honoured  
teacher.



REPORT on CARPETS, TAPESTRY, and other STUFFS for  
FURNITURE.—(Class 18.)—By M. DIGBY WYATT,  
Architect and Juror for Class 15.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

THERE are two distinct aspects under which all carpets present themselves generically—the one industrial, and the other artistic. The industrial aspect comprises the theory of manufacture, and the relations of the fabric to comfort, durability, and economy. The artistic aspect takes cognizance of the greater or less beauty of the design which adorns the carpet. That design may generally be regarded as falling into one of two categories—viz., firstly, into what the French call a “fond,” or unobtrusive basis, calculated to serve as a background, from which furniture may be satisfactorily detached; or, secondly, a picture complete in itself, and upon which the eye may rest with complacency, provided that the “ensemble” or whole effect of the design can be embraced from a single point of view. Such being the general outline of the analysis of the subject, as it presents itself to my mind, I propose to adopt its various headings as the skeleton upon which it may be well to hang the various remarks upon detail which will constitute the bulk of the present report.

Beginning, then, with the industrial aspect of the subject, it will be found that in all countries the original and commonest description of carpet differs but little from the ordinary coarse woollen cloth of the nation. In the East, the cradle of carpet manufacture, the “suttringee,” or common cotton rug, or small carpet, is an “institution” throughout India, as not very long ago the “Kidderminster” was with us. The first fundamental improvement upon the simple weaving together of a cotton or woollen warp and weft consisted in the doubling in substance of the woollen or more commonly worsted, warps; and the combination with them of wefts in various coloured yarns of wool. Then came the introduction, as backing (out of sight), of linen and hempen yarns, of closer texture and greater strength than can be obtained in wool. Varieties of these simple operations form what are known in commerce as “Kidderminster,” “Venetian,” and “Scotch” carpeting; and of these all countries make more or less—our own trade in this cheap class of goods being very large. They are principally made in Yorkshire, Durham, and Scotland; the trade of Kidderminster itself being now confined to a superior class of goods altogether.

The above  
constitute  
the chief  
headings of  
this Report.

I.—The in-  
dustrial  
aspect of  
the subject.

Original  
simple wo-  
ven carpet;

as Kidder-  
minster,  
Scotch, In-  
dian, &c.,

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TAPESTRY,  
&c.

tufted car-  
pets,

excellent,  
but costly,

from hand-  
work,

how manu-  
factured.

Of common goods the Exhibition contains very few samples from any country, the competition amongst the exhibitors raging almost exclusively between those engaged in producing the highest class of carpets, such as involve the execution of elaborate designs in the most durable shape. The next stage of elaboration in manufacture consists in making both the warp and weft in very strong materials, as of flaxen or hempen yarns, and of interweaving with them tufts or short lengths of wools of various colours, known in France as *moquettes*, so as to make up a thick woollen face, tied in by the stronger yarns. Once safely tied in, it is, of course, possible to cut the ends of the doubled up wools without fear of their pulling out from their backing, and these, pressed down and trodden back by the foot, spread and acquire thereby an additional consistence. This it is which makes all the common class of Turkish, Indian, and Algerian carpets so very durable and agreeable to the tread. Simple as this process may appear, it has enjoyed as wide and uninterrupted a sway as almost any other in the history of industrial art.

The original carpets which the Crusaders brought with them on their return from the East, to gladden the eyes of the faithful with samples of the skill of the "infidel," were made in the very same kind of loom as that which may now be seen in the machinery gallery of the Exhibition, with a half-worked "Smyrna" rug still round upon its warp. This rug is the true type of the hand-worked tufted carpet, whether it take the shape of a perfect, true Axminster in England, of the celebrated Royal manufacture of the Savonnerie in France, of the finest India or Persian carpet, or the ordinary Smyrna, or, as it is commonly called, the Turkey carpet of commerce. The operation of manufacture may be briefly described as follows:—A strong warp of string is stretched, generally vertically, from beam to beam of the loom, each alternate string being "harnessed" to the heddles of the loom. Guided by a drawing, the divisions of which correspond with the width of any given number of warp-strings, intersected at right angles by a given number of weft-strings, the weaver proceeds to wind in and out between the warp-strings differently coloured tufts of wool, in such wise as to leave the ends of the tufts sticking out at right angles to the plane of the warp. Having twisted in a row of tufts all across the loom, he works with the treadle the harness of the loom, raising the alternate strings so as to form the passage between the threads which the weaver calls his "shed." Through this he throws his shuttle, carrying with it a strong weft-string. By depressing another

treadle, he raises a different set of warp-strings, so as to form another shed, through which he throws back the shuttle to its original position. He thus weaves a few strokes, and then proceeds, with what is called the "batten, or lay," to beat back the web and warp strings which he has woven together, so as to make them hold in the woollen tufts as tightly as possible. When that has been evenly done for the whole width of the carpet, he re-commences twisting in between the warp-threads another set of woollen tufts, which he in turn secures by interweaving and beating back; and so with infinite care and patience he labours on until the whole width and length of the original warp-strings are covered with this woollen tufting. The surface is then trimmed over with large shears, in order to cut back to one uniform level any rebellious tufts which may raise their heads above their fellows. Such is, was, and probably long will be, the process of manufacturing the most beautiful carpets which have ever been made, or which as far as I can suppose ever will be made. The defects of the process are obviously its tediousness, and consequent great cost; nevertheless, the Exhibition is full of specimens of such work of the most elaborate description; and these made not only in countries such as India, Turkey, Russia, Algeria, and Holland, where labour is cheap, but in France and England, where machinery is all but human and skilled labour all but priceless. In the former of the two last-named countries the carpets of the Savonnerie and of Aubusson, and in the latter that of Mr. Lapworth, exhibit elaborate processes of hand-working in their highest perfection, next always to the one magnificent specimen sent by the Minister to the Maharajah of Cashmere, and exhibited in the Indian department.

One of the Tunisian carpets and one of the Algerian also stand out in superior excellence before the bulk of the Turkey carpets, which, in point of technical execution, are of a well-sustained high order of merit.

The original process of simple weaving having failed to ensure sufficient durability to the fabric, since wool trampled over in the direction of, or transversely to, the twisted staple of the wool is readily trodden out and unravelled—its own elasticity helping—it was found that the same staple trodden back at right angles to its length was one of the most durable substances possible, in proportion to its bulk. To ensure this condition of weaving by a mechanical instead of by a solely hand-worked process, such as that last described, what is known as "Brussels" carpet-weaving was devised—that is to say, the first operation of the previously well-

Samples in  
the Exhibi-  
tion from  
India, Tur-  
key, Russia,  
Algeria,  
Holland,  
Belgium,  
Spain, Aus-  
tria, Prussia,  
France, and  
England.

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TAPESTRY,  
&c.

how manu-  
factured,

known velvet-weaving process was applied to the manufacture of carpets. For the sake of simplicity, let us suppose that the carpet is to be produced in one colour, without any figure upon its surface. The worsted warp, as well as a hempen or linen warp, having been harnessed to the "treadles" and "heddles," as for common weaving, and the passage for the shuttle formed, the weaver throws over, transversely, a hempen or linen shoot, making by throws following the alternate action of the treadles a coarse *canvas* starting. He then begins to interweave his worsted warp, and at this stage the special peculiarity of his process begins. The difficulty is to raise up the worsted warp so as to form the little loops of wool noticeable on the face of a Brussels carpet. This is done by forming a "shed" or shuttle-way between the woollen and the linen warps, the former being raised and the latter depressed. At this stage the weaver inserts a small iron rod into the "shed," or shuttle-way, and presses it home towards his breast. He then works his treadles so as to draw down the worsted warp and raise up the linen one, so confining the iron rod and forming a new shuttle-way. Across this he throws his shuttle, and then again raises the woollen warp. Another iron rod is inserted, and similarly woven in until some half-dozen are confined. The weaver then withdraws the one nearest him for re-use beyond those furthest from him, which are left in to keep the work steady until sufficient weaving is done to prevent any risk of the loops pulling out. Care is of course taken, by beating a sort of strong comb (the "batten") back towards the breast of the weaver, to keep the work well closed up and compact as it goes on. In this way a plain Brussels carpet may be made; but the problem is much complicated when patterns with several colours are required. For each separate colour a separate worsted warp is indispensable; and it is obvious that lengths of each thread of the warp must be used, varying with the proportions of each colour brought up, by looping, to the surface of the fabric. Each thread, therefore, requires to be wound, at the end furthest from the weaver's "breast roll," round a separate bobbin, weighted so as to give it a slight tendency to rotate in its frame in a direction contrary to that in which it would be moved by pulling up the thread to form the loop. This gives an equal amount of tension to the woollen warp-threads, whether they be much or little used in the formation of the pattern. Of course all the bobbins, with the yarns of the same colour, are fixed upon the same frame; and the carpet is generally spoken of as a two-frame, three-frame, four or five "frame," or "ply" carpet, according to the number of

such separate frames or sets of coloured warps requisite for the development of the pattern. The mounting of the loom is now generally effected on the "Jacquard" system, the beautiful automatic operation of which raises for every stroke of the shuttle and insertion of the iron rods just those threads from each frame which should be brought to the surface in order to form the pattern with proper loops. Some idea of the complication arrived at at this stage may be formed from a knowledge that to weave a good figured carpet, yard wide, involves the use of about 1,800 bobbins and threads for each web.

The conversion of this from a hand-worked process into a power-loom process is one of the greatest triumphs of modern ingenuity; and it is most honourable to English ingenuity and perseverance that every difficulty has now been overcome in this country, and that Kidderminster, Durham and Glasgow now manufacture Brussels carpets for all the world. Strange to say, however, in spite of the general consumption of the article, I scarcely observed a "Brussels" carpet in the whole Exhibition.

To convert a Brussels carpet into a "pile" carpet, all that is requisite is to borrow the second operation from velvet-making. This consists in ploughing a groove into the surface of the iron rods around which the loops are twisted, and taking care that the rods are so inserted as to keep this groove always furthest from the back of the carpet. A sharp cutter run along the line of this groove from side to side at once releases the rod and forms the cut pile. The surface is subsequently trimmed, or shorn, to make the whole perfectly true and level. A carpet so woven becomes what is commonly known as a Jacquard woven cut-pile carpet, and this description of carpet forms the staple of the French and English goods sent to the Exhibition. I shall presently note the leading exceptions. In 1855 everyone interested in such machines was delighted with the loom for manufacturing Brussels and velvet-pile carpeting which was exhibited by Mr. Wood, of Monkhill, and which was as perfectly self-acting as any such machine could be conceived to be.

The next stage in the working out of carpet-making machinery was the endeavour to get rid of the complicated sets of frames with infinite bobbins for multiplied colours. This has been attempted in two ways, one unsuccessful, the other successful. The former by attempting to print and "through dye" a plain tufted fabric so as to cover it with various coloured patterns. This failed because it turned out to be impossible to more than superficially dye the wools, if the

involving  
great com-  
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verted in  
England  
from a  
handworked  
to a "power  
loom" ma-  
nufacture.Process, and  
conversion  
to "pile"  
fabric, with  
Jacquard  
pattern.Simplifica-  
tion of pro-  
cess,

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

by Whit-  
tock's in-  
vention ;  
with Cross-  
ley's im-  
provements.

fabric was of sufficient closeness of texture to be good and durable in wear. The successful process—the brilliant invention of Mr. Richard Whittock of Edinburgh—in which, under the auspices of Sir Francis Crossley, an immense trade is carried on at Halifax, consists in translating upon paper the finished pattern as it should appear, when the carpet is laid down, into another pattern representing what would be the pattern if all the threads of which the finished carpet would be composed should be pulled out and laid flat side by side. A series of threads are then coloured to correspond with this pattern (suppressing the lengths usually thrown to the back of a carpet made on the old plan) by an ingenious operation too complicated for description in this report. The threads so dyed are then arranged as warps, and in that form present a most singular appearance, not indicating in the slightest degree to the uninitiated eye the pattern intended to be ultimately realised. The subsequent operation of weaving up the printed warps restores the translation to the original. Either Brussels or velvet pile carpets may of course be made by this process, and such carpets are generally known as “printed warp” carpets. The chief alleged drawback to these carpets is that the printing of the woollen threads is not supposed to give them quite as good or solid a colouring as when they are dyed in the yarn. The chief alleged drawback to the Jacquard pile carpets is that they are apt to run short in the staple. Mr. Alexander Whittock of Edinburgh, in an excellent paper on carpet manufacture and design read at the Society of Arts in 1856, points out the extreme economy effected by his relative's improvement. “Not only,” says he, “is the Jacquard superseeded, and the large frames done away with, but it is possible to place three looms to be occupied on this new fabric into the space which one Brussels loom requires. One beam is substituted for 1,300 little beams or bobbins, and a better cover is made with 780 threads than with 2,600.”

Tests of  
excellence in  
carpet ma-  
nufacture.

The four great tests of excellence in both Brussels and pile carpeting are—first, the length of the loop, or pile; second, the quality of the woollen yarns; third, the number of threads to the inch in width; and, fourth, the compactness of weaving at the back, so as to perfectly tie in the loops and cut filaments which form the pile. If the pile, or tufts, can be made perfectly secure from pulling out in wear, the longer they are, or rather the higher they rise from the back of the carpet, the greater will its durability be. It is much easier to tie in “moquettes,” or little tufts of wool plaited in by hand securely (because the threads of the tuft are already intertwined and matted together before tying), than any

loop or tuft formed from wool or worsted which has been spun, or has once been brought into a state of even moderate tension: since the latter operation injures the natural tendency of the fibre to interlock. That is why the hand-worked Turkish and Indian goods can be made so extraordinarily lasting. Among the Algerian rugs in the present Exhibition was one I examined with the British juror,—Mr. Peter Graham,—which, for fulness and length of pile, combined with admirable strength in the tying in, was, although of rough appearance, from imperfect shearing, an admirable model of what such a carpet should be in texture and mode of manufacture.

In mentioning Mr. Graham's name, I feel it right to acknowledge how much I learnt from a close examination of the products of Class 18, with one so thoroughly competent to judge them in every respect as that gentleman.

The next great stage of improvement in carpet making Brilliant improvement aimed at the suppression of the complicated "frames," or "plies," for each separate colour, and yet the employment of wools "dyed in the yarn."

This has been achieved by the adoption of one of the most brilliant ideas which ever entered the head of a manufacturer.

Hitherto, we have seen all attempts at carpet weaving with a pile made either by inserting tufts of wool or by bringing the warp-threads into loops to the surface for subsequent cutting. The process I am about to describe goes upon the entirely different system of attaching the tufts or cut-pile to a strong weft-thread, and then so interweaving this tufted weft-thread with linen or hempen warp-threads, as to make a compact fabric, with all the woollen pile on the surface. If it is difficult to do this in a plain monochrome fabric, how much more difficult must it be to so carry it out as to produce a figure of various colours upon the surface? The present Exhibition contains many attestations of the successful resolution of the problem by Mr. James Templeton, of Glasgow.

To this gentleman I applied for some special information as to his most ingenious invention, and received a kind and most modest reply, in which, after doing full justice to contemporary makers of carpets by other processes, he goes on to state:—"You are aware that the Axminster carpet, first made in the town of Axminster, was an imitation, and was made or woven in the same manner as the Syrian or Turkey carpet—that is, by tufting or knotting on to a vertically placed warp the yarns which form the surface and pattern. This was, and still is, a very tedious process. For ten years previous to 1839 (in which year I patented the invention of making or weaving Axminster carpeting by

effected by  
Templeton  
of Glasgow.

His process of manufacture based on "che-nille" weaving.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

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a new process) I was a shawl manufacturer in Paisley, and, amongst other goods, made a great many of what are termed chenille shawls, the process of which was to weave a pattern on a warp, the warp having been spaced in the reed according to the depth or thickness of pile required. This first cloth was then cut between the spaces into shreds, and then, these shreds having been twisted into a spiral form, they were woven on to another warp, marks for the weaver's guidance having been woven in the first weaving to enable him to place the shreds so as to bring out the complete pattern in the second weaving. The idea occurred to us (one of my weavers and myself) that, if cloth could be so woven as, when cut into shreds and not twisted to form chenille, but left free, so that the two cut edges of the shred might collapse and form a pile, or fur, as we term it, it would, when rewoven on to another warp or surface, produce a velvet, a pile, or an Axminster surface. This was accomplished by a certain mode of gauze-weaving, and a patent was taken out for it. In protecting this patent, in 1847, on a trial in which we got a verdict on all the issues, the Judge (the late Lord Robertson), when re-examining a witness, smartly remarked, after he had seen the difference between our products and those of our opponents (our opponents wished to make out that ours was only the old chenille process), 'Oh ! I see--this new fabric (or shred) has its backbone where it ought to be, and the chenille has its backbone in its middle.' I mention this circumstance to help you to recognize the difference between the two ; but, if you take any narrow strip of cloth and twist it, you will at once see what was meant. The chenille or twisted strip or shred becoming spiral, gave a pattern on both sides of the cloth, the cut edges standing out, when twisted, in every direction ; while our backbone, with its vertebrae, formed a ready-made pile for throwing on one side of the cloth only.

Difficulties  
attendant  
upon its  
introduction,  
but  
ultimate  
great suc-  
cess.

"The foregoing will give you an idea of the origin and basis of the structure of our patent Axminster carpeting. Great were the difficulties met with in prosecuting it to a successful issue, involving too great a variety of gradual improvements to describe in detail in the compass of a letter (or of such a report as the present). Every change or new improvement in manufacture has its difficulties: this one certainly had its share, and I do not believe that any consideration or remuneration would induce me to fight the first three or four years' battles over again. By perseverance, however, in the course of years, prejudice was disarmed and difficulties gradually disappeared or were overcome. By aiming at superior fabric and pattern, employing first-class

designers and workmen, and also by providing the best machinery for the various processes, step by step our manufacture has attained the position it now occupies.

“ I need hardly remind you that there was a time when first-class artists could hardly be induced to prepare patterns or designs for textile fabrics.

“ In 1851 we induced Mr. E. T. Paris to give us a design for a medallion carpet and another for a rich table-cover, both of which we then exhibited; and some years ago you yourself were kind enough to prepare for us a series of most suggestive sheets of sketches. More recently still, your professional occupations engrossing you so very much, Mr. Owen Jones has favoured us with carpet designs, several of which are now ‘on cloth’ at the Paris Exhibition. I am glad to know that now other manufacturers of textile fabrics, carpeting and other figured goods, employ superior talent, and sometimes even genius, for these designs (and, from the superior art-education of foreign manufacturers and their workmen or designers, unless this is done to a still greater extent we may be left in the background with regard to many of our textile fabrics) in which, undoubtedly, taste and experienced judgment are as essential to perfect commercial success as the material, even, of which any textile fabric may be made.”

Mr. Templeton’s goods, of which there are many first-rate specimens in the Exhibition, some of which have been manufactured for other exhibitors, have now taken a firm hold in public estimation, and his trade is most extensive.

Other British makers are now bestirring themselves in the same direction, and, as Mr. Templeton’s patent rights become public property, there is no doubt that the Kidderminster manufacturers will “take kindly” to the chenille process; and, indeed, already Messrs. Brinton and Lewis, with their “Indian Axminster,” tread closely on Mr. Templeton’s heels.

What the future of the carpet manufacture in France and other countries will be it is as yet very hard to prognosticate. In simplification of process with elaborate results they are at present far behind Templeton, Crossley, and Brinton.

Before leaving the subject of the technical processes of various countries, I should note that, although carpets are now made at Aubusson with velvet pile, the original and special process is a hand-worked one, analogous to that by which Gobelins and Beauvais tapestries are produced. The main difference consists in the texture of the woollen yarns.

I now turn to that which will probably prove the more interesting portion of my subject—its artistic aspect. It is

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CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

Increased  
attention  
paid to de-  
sign.

Mr. Temple-  
ton’s views  
thereon.

and current  
products.

Excellence  
of Brinton  
and Lewis’s  
“Indian Ax-  
minsters.”

France far  
behind  
Templeton,  
Crossley,  
& Brinton  
& Lewis.

II.—The  
artistic as-  
pect of the  
subject.

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TAPESTRY,  
&c.

no doubt good to make a warm, comfortable, durable carpet, but it is something little less essential to enjoyment to make it beautiful also. To do the latter, happily, entails the loss of no single excellence aimed at by those who would attain to the former, and, as far as one's experience in the past extends, it is pleasant to remember that the most beautiful carpets have been also amongst the best and most lasting. Too often in industrial art the beautiful perishes while the ugly endures, but this has been by no means the case with carpets.

Condition of  
design ap-  
plied to  
carpets in  
1855.

Mr. Red-  
grave's  
views there-  
on, and  
condem-  
nation  
of French  
eccentrici-  
ties.

Before instituting any comparison between two bodies in movement, it is well to note the starting-point of each, or rather their relative position at a given point of time. Let us assume as a good point of departure for the comparison of the changes which a period of 12 years has wrought in the artistic aspect of the French and English carpet manufactures, the condition of both at the last Parisian Exhibition in 1855. Mr. Richard Redgrave, than whom no one is entitled to speak with more weight, from his long and close observation of cause and effect in the progress of international manufactures, in the last-mentioned year made a careful record of what he then observed, and found much reason to condemn the irrational style of the majority of the most highly premiated of the French designs.\* He thus described a leading Parisian carpet in 1855:—“A mossy border, powdered with daisies, margins a square space, wherein are clustered, as in a parterre, flowers of the largest size and gaudiest hues. From among these flowers grow up funereal yews, and through the openings of their interweaving branches are seen vistas of sunny landscapes, lakes, mountains, and clear blue sky. Above, the stag-like branches of the trees twine into fantastic compartments, in which, or through which, are seen pictured in the upper air manufactories, with their tall chimneys, steam-engines, implements of agriculture and of art, and groups of the products of industry. Then garlands of flowers dangle upwards far into the canopy of sky, on which, as it were, in the very vault of heaven itself, are heaped together grapes, bagpipes, vats, melons, pipes and tabors, sheaves, fiddles, pitchforks, and coats of arms. This, strange as is the description, is a carpet worked for the city of Bordeaux at a great expense, and this, too, designed by one who has received many medals, the manufacturer being honoured by the jury with a first-class medal also. (Mr. Redgrave had previously described

\* Mr. Redgrave on “Design as applied to Manufactures.” Reports to Government on the Paris Universal Exhibition.

some other equally wonderful specimens of extravagance in carpet design.) These are taken almost at random ; notes of many other important works are but repetitions of the same characteristics. What wonder, then, that within the circle of the panorama nineteen-twentieths (this is said advisedly) of the carpets there displayed—carpets for the household, not for the palace—were equally treated as pictures, very many of them consisting of flowers combined with landscapes ; and, of course, as being made in breadths, repeating such pictures many times over the same floor."

Such was no extraordinary illustration of the current faults of French carpet design as they appeared to a cultivated observer in 1855, one, however, keenly alive to the manufacturing skill and graphic power which the execution of such difficult productions may be said to have wasted. The English goods exhibited on the same occasion, if less ambitious, were more reasonable ; if involving less draughtsmanship in the preparation of the designs, they were certainly carried out in quieter and better taste. This wise restraint may have been partly due to our scarcely possessing at that date the manual dexterity of the French *dessinateurs pour étoffes*, but in a yet higher degree may be attributed to the enunciation of sound principles of industrial design which was made in this country at periods immediately anterior and subsequent to the Exhibition of 1851, which gave an extraordinary impulse to popular as well as professional taste. These wholesome doctrines, thanks to Owen Jones, Mr. Redgrave himself, and to others, took good root, and, after sundry struggles, fructified. To them and to the practical common-sense of many of our best manufacturers we are indebted for the great improvement manifested by the English carpets of 1855 over those shown in 1851, and by the English carpets of 1867 over those of 1855. Writing in the last-named year, Mr. Redgrave says :—" In England the battle of principles has been fairly fought, and is nearly won, for, while our inventions for printing carpets, either in the piece or in the warp, have placed unlimited decorative means at the command of the manufacturers, there is evidence of a more restrained use of these means than formerly was seen even in woven carpets, these having at the same time been greatly and visibly improved in taste and in true principles of decoration."

Thus it would appear, on the testimony of one well able to judge, that, although the balance of dexterity preponderated in 1855 in favour of the French, that of correct taste was clearly inclining towards the English. In the present Exhibition, with still greater certainty, the same may be

Contemporary  
design  
in England  
purer  
though less  
facile.

True canons  
of taste  
now satis-  
factorily  
 vindicated  
 by English  
 Exhibitors,  
 —exceptions  
 noted.

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WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

averred, but with the important distinction that the progress of the English in the direction of good command over both colour and form in the ready adaptation of ornament to any given set of conditions has been much more rapid than that of the French towards sobriety and prudence in the class of patterns they use, or rather abuse, for the enrichment of their most elaborate carpets. If we except one or two extraordinary errors in point of taste made by isolated English exhibitors, the productions of the whole of the residue may be accepted as free from any serious reproach, while in France designers and manufacturers of the greatest eminence, even those who direct Imperial establishments, continue to perpetrate clever excesses in all directions—excesses of so flagrant a nature as to be irredeemable by any amount of pictorial skill. It is, in fact, from the superabundance of pictorial facility that most of what is reprehensible in design arises.

Tempta-  
tions to  
make car-  
pets picto-  
rial in de-  
sign.

Dangers of  
so doing.

There is no class of products of industry more difficult to do justice to in international exhibitions than carpets. Sufficient space can never be afforded for their display as they will be used, and they have consequently to be hung up and shown as pictures. Now, as it may be looked upon as a fundamental principle that no picture could make an agreeable carpet; so likewise, it may be conceded that no good carpet can make a satisfactory picture. The consequence of this vicious system of exhibition is that the greatest possible temptation is offered to the manufacturer competing with his fellows to depart from what is fitting for a carpet in order to make his carpet look a little better when exhibited as a picture. I would not go so far as to attribute to this all the family of bad pictures presented by the florid carpets of the Exhibition; but it certainly tends to their retention long after they have received their *exequatur* at the hands of the "faithful in art." The chief reasons why what is admissible in a picture, or, with certain differences, in mural decoration or paper-hanging, is inadmissible in a carpet (or, indeed, in any form of ornamental flooring), may be briefly summed up thus:—

Why—  
I.—From  
varying  
sources of  
illumina-  
tion.

First. The varying sources of light usual in an apartment falsify any attempt at chiaroscuro in the carpet, while, without more or less light and shade, pictorial representation is impossible.

II.—From  
falsifications  
of perspec-  
tive.

Second. The effect of lineal or aerial perspective, or even of undulation, runs counter to the sense of security which should be assured by the surface upon which the foot is planted.

Third. There are but few natural objects suitable for representation pictorially upon which it would be agreeable to tread; and it is impossible to divest the mind of a certain sense of impropriety in trampling even upon the representation of what it would be painful to tread upon in reality.

Fourth. The better the picture the more annoying any soiling of the surface upon which it is portrayed becomes; and an uncomfortable nervous apprehension takes the place of the free and unrestrained use of what should be a comfort rather than a fret.

Fifth. Carpets require to be traversed in all directions; the point of view can never, therefore, be fixed. It is, of course, a fundamental necessity in pictorial representation that the position of the spectator of what is represented should be predetermined, and the only proper point of view for the picture should correspond with such pre-supposed position. As the point of view of a carpet can scarcely ever be fixed, it consequently becomes an improper plane upon which to project pictorial form.

Sixth. To properly see and enjoy a picture the spectator should have free liberty to retire from its surface until his eye is able to comprehend the whole at a glance, and then to approach, in order to be able to examine the careful reproduction of detail. In the case of a picture delineated on the surface of a carpet such a liberty can very rarely exist, since the eye of the spectator can scarcely ever be withdrawn from it more than about six feet without looking at it at such angles as to produce rapid foreshortening and a consequent falsification of relative dimensions in the objects portrayed.

Such being a few among the many good reasons which exist why a carpet or any other ornamental floor or floor covering should never be a picture, it is strange that throughout the Western world, from the classical ages to the present, in the form either of mosaic, tarsia, majolica, stone or marble inlay, or embroidered or woven carpeting, there has been an almost incessant effort to produce horizontal pictures in materials ill calculated for their satisfactory execution.

In the East, however, better traditions and better taste have been preserved. India and Persia, Turkey and Morocco have steadily maintained the beautiful geometrical grouping of conventional forms which are most fitting for use in the textile arts, and most especially for such fabrics as cannot be exhibited vertically when in ordinary use.

Well, indeed, may Mr. Owen Jones direct us, as he has done in his admirable letter in the *Times* of April 19 last, to the fountains of inspiration of which he has himself drunk

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TAPESTRY,  
&c.

III.—From  
pictures  
affording  
awkward  
treading.

IV.—From  
fear of soil-  
ing and  
spoiling.

V.—From  
constant  
change of  
observers'  
point of  
view.

VI.—From  
inability of  
observers  
to duly recede  
and ap-  
proach.

These dan-  
gers little  
heeded, and  
consequent  
frequent  
failure in  
ambitious  
carpet de-  
sign.

Good prin-  
ciples always  
maintained  
in the East.

As testified  
by Mr. Owen  
Jones,

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

so deeply. Well may he point out to us that, while in the practice of the West there are danger and confusion, in the traditions of the East lie safety and simplicity.

In speaking of the Orientals, Mr. Jones says:—"By an unerring instinct and tradition they are able to apply ornament to the surfaces of objects they desire to decorate in the exact proportion and scale which the general form, material, and destination of such objects require. In the balance of colours, and in the distribution of the lines of the ornament, they arrive at a perfection which it seems beyond the European mind to reach. . . . We would venture to recommend the visitor who desires to study this Exhibition with reference to the influence of art on manufactures to commence his studies with the Oriental collections. When thoroughly impressed with the true principles of decoration and ornament which he will find in these works, and carrying these principles in his mind during his visits to the collections of European countries, we feel assured that he will value these latter only so far as they observe the general laws of all art, and which Orientals so instinctively follow—laws which were equally followed in all great periods of art, and which are to be found in all great works of the past. It is the neglect of these unvarying principles which leads so often to ugliness and bad taste in the incessant search of the present time after novelty irrespective of fitness." The man of "the present time," so arraigned at the bar of criticism, naturally rebels, and proclaims his independence of tradition, which he regards but as a thraldom, limiting invention and inducing monotony. On this ground he will find Mr. Owen Jones quite ready to meet him with a vindication of the infinite novelty and invention which may be found in every variety of Oriental fabric. All are subordinated to common principles of structure and to common limits as to the reproduction of natural types, and yet each sample is a fresh and distinct delight. Can the same be said of the corresponding fabrics of the West?

These, it may be remembered, are not the sentiments of a theorist only, but of one who has shown in this very Exhibition, and in the class on which I am writing, his power to practice as well as to "preach." Next in point of excellence to the carpets of the East, upon which Mr. Owen Jones has founded his style, may, I think, certainly be ranked those exhibited by Messrs. Templeton, and manufactured from Mr. Jones's design. His arrangements of form and colour for the rugs of Messrs. Willis, of Kidderminster, are no less happy. Both are unfortunately displayed, the former especially so, since the mass of window immediately over

as a writer,

and as a  
successful  
designer.  
Carpets  
as back-  
grounds.

the range of carpets takes almost all the brilliancy out of the livelier colours, and turns the neutrals all but black. These carpets are especially calculated to serve as "fonds," and to bring out to the utmost the characteristics of the mural decorations and sumptuous equipment in furniture, works of art, &c., of the apartments in which they may be laid down.

Allowance in looking at them, and, indeed, at any other carpets in the Exhibition, must be made for the awkward angle at which the top light strikes the wool, and is hidden, as it were, from the eye of the spectator. As he looks up to a carpet suspended vertically above his head he sees the side of each filament of wool, of which the carpet is composed, in shadow only, the illuminated side of the same filament being visible only to an eye placed above the level of the filament. The consequence is that the whole effect of the carpet is unnaturally darkened, and the luminosity is taken out of its scale of colour. As carpets are illuminated and seen in use the effect is entirely different. When so tested the light is usually found to fall almost at right angles to the surface of the carpet, and to so illuminate the whole length of its filaments or pile; while the eye of the spectator, looking down upon the surface of the carpet almost at the same angle, sees the light glancing all along the length of the filament or pile. The consequence is that the lowest toned tints acquire strength and vivacity, and give relief and brilliancy to the lighter and more vivid colours.

The general use of ornamental flooring in the East, and parquetry on the continent of Europe, tends to the maintenance of the popularity of rectangular carpets over those manufactured in widths, such as our usual Brussels goods, and adapted for completely covering surfaces of any irregularity of form. It is, of course, much less difficult to produce an agreeable design when that design is bounded by a regular figure than when it is limited to a short "repeat," running into all the corners and recesses of a room; and, further, it is much easier to produce an agreeable symmetrical design when the whole is contained, as in the case of a rug, within a few square feet than when it is extended to very many, as in the case of a large carpet. The reason of this is, that the eye of the spectator, always remaining at about an equal distance from the surface of the carpet spread upon the floor, embraces at one view easily the whole area of the rug, while of the carpet it with difficulty takes in without moving any more than a fractional part of the whole design. Hence it is, that generally we are better pleased

Impossibility of properly exhibiting carpets when suspended vertically.

How and why.

Carpets of regular figure easier to design than "all over" patterns.

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WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

How and  
why.

Vigour of  
colour es-  
sential.

with the patterns of rugs than of carpets, although an equal amount of clever design may have been applied to each. It is with a view to evade the difficulty of embracing the whole of a large design at one view that the Orientals with such excellent tact subdue by equal balancing and minute subdivision the component parts of all their large designs; thus entertaining the eye with symmetry upon a small scale, and preventing its desire to run out over the extended pattern in search of the completion of the form upon a fraction of which it has first seized. Neglectful of such prudent restraint in large modern carpets, we often find a line or border of white, or of brilliant colour, running over the whole carpet and giving, as it were, the key to its geometrical setting out. The purpose and working of this line are, of course, apparent and rational enough when the whole carpet is seen; but when the eye is fixed, perhaps, upon not more than one-sixteenth of the whole, the purpose of the line is not revealed, and all the filling in, which is grouped about this line, appears to be equally purposeless. The true principle is that rather of subdividing the whole area of the carpet into symmetrical forms, as in an ordinary mosaic pavement, and then of so grouping those symmetrical forms, each complete in itself, as to make them work together to the composition of some general effect, bounded and kept together by a strong border. When this principle is followed the eye is satisfied if it takes in only one-sixteenth, say, of the whole; it is again satisfied if it takes in a quarter of the whole, when it becomes sensible of a new basis of composition; and it is ultimately gratified with an aspect of fresh completeness when it embraces the whole area of the carpet. When it is neglected, unless the whole of the carpet, or at any rate more than half, can be seen at a glance, the pattern seems purposeless; and, from aiming at expressing too much design, the artist conveys to the spectator's eye the impression of his having given little or none. It is better even that his complete carpet should be monotonous than that its subdivisions should be unsymmetrical.

It is the very strength of illumination to which carpets are generally exposed, and the proximity of their surface to the eye, which demand and enforce solidity and sobriety of tone. Weak tints will never answer; the designer must work rapidly, with a full brush, a strong will, no vacillation, and a rich palette, and with the full assurance that none of his work can ever escape attention. All will be well and clearly seen, and a uniform strength and manliness of tone must therefore be sustained over the whole. Depth of tone should be obtained by the agglomeration of vigorous colours in

small compartments, and by the avoidance of strong contrasts in immediate proximity, either of light and dark, or of complementary colours; and not by lowering tones, as by the general addition of black. In fact, to borrow the painter's phraseology, power and depth should be got by "first-painting" and not by "glazing-down." Great richness is frequently obtained in the finest Persian carpets by subtle differences in the most highly illuminated tints, as by working with alternate crimson and scarlet reds, instead of with one monotonous red between the two, as we often do, or by using, say, a turquoise and an ultra-marine blue together, or by relieving a "lemon" against a "cadmium" yellow. Transparent half tints of great power are obtained by admixtures, as by spotting a black ground with orange to produce a luminous effect of brown instead of using a solid untransparent brown; or by spotting a black ground with blue and yellow to obtain a vivid olive, instead of using a solid olive, which in the mass would only look dead and heavy. Such fabrics are full of subtle contrivances which seem to spring into being spontaneously under the hand of the true artist. The painted picture-books of the Japanese are singularly rich in these subtleties.

In assessing progress generally there are two tests which should be applied—viz., endeavours to ascertain the relative abundance of the very good and the relative scarcity of the very bad. Applying these tests to assess the amount of progress made in the carpet trade since 1851, the first, the abundance of the very good, is slightly in favour of 1867. In point of excellence of manufacture this is scarcely so conspicuous, as in point of propriety of design. India and Turkey are, as usual, unimpeachable. France in all its productions of Oriental styles is very good; and in England most of the carpets of Templeton, Jackson and Graham, Brinton, Southwell, Boyle and Smith, and Lapworth are better than the best of the goods manufactured by English carpet manufacturers in 1851 (if we except, perhaps, one carpet designed by Pugin), or even in 1855 or 1862. The rugs of Willis, of Kidderminster, constitute a notable advance; and so, in a particular direction, do the goods exhibited by Messrs. Jones and Willis and others in the Architectural Court.

In Belgium, Russia, and Holland the advance is not marked; but in Austria, through the powerful house of Haas and Sons, a great deal has been achieved.

When we apply the second test, that of the relative scarcity of the very bad, we shall find a still more notable advance. If some extraordinary picture carpets, such as

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TAPESTRY,  
&c.

How to be  
obtained.

Tests of  
progress  
applied to  
India, Tur-  
key, France,  
England,  
Belgium,  
Russia, Hol-  
land, Aus-  
tria, in the  
shape of  
predomi-  
nance of the  
really good.

The same  
in the  
shape of  
"relative  
scarcity" of  
the very bad.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

English  
progress in  
design  
mainly due  
to A. W.  
Pugin and  
Owen Jones.

Creed of the  
last-named  
artist.

that of the portrait of the Emperor, of the twelve apostles, of the meeting of the Emperor and the Queen of England, and one or two more of a similar kind, but less outrageous, are excepted, and the eyes are shut to a few monster roses and too fervid rugs (the latter especially abounding in France), there remains nothing to equal the turbulent allegory and landscape of 1851, and in a minor degree of the succeeding exhibitions. This change for the better is due in a great measure to the just theories enunciated by men like Owen Jones and Welby Pugin, whose honest perseverance and enthusiasm have gone far to strengthen the true-sighted, to determine the wavering in taste, and to convert many a previously "hardened sinner" in the ways of false principles and faulty practice of this branch of industrial art to juster and more reasonable paths. Pugin's views are set forth sufficiently distinctly in his "True Principles" and "Apology," but those of Owen Jones (having been, for the most part, orally enunciated) are not as well known to the literary world as they should be. I may therefore with advantage quote from his privately-printed lectures "On the "True and the False in the Decorative Arts" the following articles of his creed as touching the chief products included in Class 18 of the Exhibition of 1867.

"Carpets," says Mr. Jones, "should be darker in tone and more broken in hue than any portion of a room, both because they present the largest mass of colour, and because they serve as a background to the furniture placed upon them.

"As a general rule lighter carpets may be used in rooms thinly furnished than the contrary, as we should otherwise have too overpowering a mass of shade. Turkey carpets are by universal consent adopted for dining-rooms, but not all Turkey carpets (and, indeed, very few) are fitted for such a purpose. The generality of Turkey carpets consist of a border, with the whole middle of the carpet forming one large pattern converging to the centre. All-over patterns are much more rare. In the East Turkey carpets are placed on a raised platform or dais at one end of a saloon, and all round the edge of it are cushions, on which the Easterns recline, so that the whole middle of the carpet is perfectly free, and the complete pattern is seen at a glance. This is not the case when they are transferred to our dining-rooms, where the dining-table alone cuts off the best half of it. So you see even the favourite Turkey carpet must go with the Cashmere shawls, and is another instance of our adopting an article from a foreign country and applying to a purpose for which it was not intended.

"The principle of design in a Turkey carpet is perfect, and our manufacturers would do well, instead of copying them in Axminster, as is their wont, to apply the principles to be learnt from them in producing carpets more in harmony with their requirements.

"I will say no more on the floral style but to express a regret that the more perfect the manufacturing process in carpets becomes, the more do they (the carpets) appear to lend themselves to evil. The modest Kidderminster carpet rarely goes wrong, because it cannot; it has to deal with but two colours, and consequently much mischief is beyond its reach. The Brussels carpet, which deals with five colours, is more mischievous. The tapestry carpets, where the colours are still more numerous, are vicious in the extreme, whilst the recent invention of printed carpets, with no bounds to its ambition, has become positively criminal."

The only objections I have ever heard raised to these and similar dogmas of Mr. Owen Jones are that they are so precise and logical as to leave little scope for the change and novelty of style constantly demanded—insufficient latitude for fancy—and that they serve, therefore, as fetters, instead of crutches, to the weak. To this I have heard it replied that for art or art-industry to flourish strenuously in any country, fetters are necessary for the weak. Those who are strong enough may burst away from them if they see fit.

It would have been impossible for Mr. Jones to have selected better illustrations of the successful working of his principles than are to be met with in the Indian and Persian departments of the present Exhibition.

In the former are to be found, under Dr. Forbes Watson's judicious arrangement, good samples of five leading varieties manufactured on the continent of India, viz. :—

Indian  
carpets—  
five varie-  
ties:

1. The suttringees, or common cotton rugs and small carpets, generally in stripes or chessboard patterns, blue and white, manufactured on Kidderminster principles, and used all over India.

I.—Common  
cotton.

2. A carpet made like Turkey carpeting, but with cotton instead of woollen tufting. These two are common in India, and largely manufactured at Hyderabad, Mysore, Tanjore, Sasseram, Jubbulpore, &c.

II.—Woven  
cotton  
tufted.

3. Woollen tufted carpets, corresponding with the Turkey carpet of European commerce in material as well as in make. These are largely made now in Northern and Central India and at many Government gaols. Large numbers of convicts are actively employed in this class of production. Several samples of their skill are shown from Jubbulpore Bangalore, Patna, &c. Such carpets, made at Mirzapore, Gorruckpore,

III.—Wool-  
len tufted.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

IV.—Cash-  
mere wool-  
len tufted.

V.—Silken  
carpets.

Superb spec-  
imen of  
best sorts  
from India  
and Persia.

Turkish and  
Tunisian  
carpets.

&c., and others of finer quality, are imported into England by well-known dealers, such as Messrs. Watson, Bontor, and Co., Messrs. Robinson, Vincent, and Co., and Messrs. Brinton and Lewis, by the latter especially, as models for their own guidance in manufacture.

4. Carpets made of Cashmere wool, and of the utmost delicacy both of design and fabrication. The most perfect carpet in any department of the whole Exhibition, taking design and manufacture together, is of this class, and has been sent to Europe as a choice specimen of native produce by his Highness Dewan Singh, Chief Minister of Cashmere.

I am glad to know that it has been purchased, at the price of several hundred pounds, for reproduction, if possible, in this country, by Mr. Brinton, with whom, and with Dr. Watson and Mr. Peter Graham, I examined it closely.

The fifth, and most costly of all Indian carpets, is the variety made partially or entirely of silk. The most beautiful carpets of the kind I have ever seen have been old Persian and North Indian. Exquisite examples are now forwarded from Tanjore in Madras and from Central Asia, where at Khutan, in Beloochistan, &c. a most interesting and almost Greek type of design is preserved, differing essentially from either ordinary Hindoo or Mohammedan.

Of such silken carpets the Persian department of the Exhibition failed to furnish us with any examples, so far as my observation extended, but by way of consolation for their absence provided, in a series of woollen rugs and divan coverings, an extraordinarily beautiful set of models of what perfect carpets should be. In them the conventional Flora of the carpet designer seemed to bloom into enduring freshness, and unobtrusive liveliness pervaded every specimen. They seemed to have but one fault, viz., high price; not that they appear dear when the infinite amount of hand-work involved in their production is taken into account, but that they were costly as compared with European goods.

In all these carpets the design is unexceptionable; and although there is, as it were, a family "strain" running through the whole, the actual variety of detail seems endless, both in form and colour.

The carpets in the Exhibition which manifest the closest kindred to the Indian and Persian are the Turkish and Tunisian. Of the former of these there are no less than some 250 exhibitors, the majority of whom stand upon about an equal footing of excellence. To individualise the "wife of Ibrahim," the "wife of Mustapha," and the inhabitants of this or that village, would be waste of time, except for the Smyrniote agents, who buy up the carpets from the makers

for shipping. We shall rather pursue the subject by noticing the produce of factories in which efforts are made to execute carpets by means of analogous processes, beginning with Holland, and then taking up Russia, Greece, Spain, Austria, Algiers, and Tunis. After a few passing words on Prussia and Belgium, I shall conclude this branch of my subject by noticing the products of France and England in somewhat more detail.

It is strange that, expressly founded to reproduce such excellent models as are furnished by the majority of the Turkish and Smyrna goods, the Royal Manufactory of Holland, at Deventer, when attempting something exceptional, should fall into a strange error of imitating a third-rate French style. The large carpet with a "marone" ground, and a miserable bunch of roses, or rather red cabbages, on a panel in the middle, sets forth in a very staring shape the prominent defects most usually to be met with in such French carpets as were generally manufactured for exportation to America and elsewhere some twenty years ago, and are still exceptionally produced.

Dutch carpets.

In no part of the Exposition is the relative superiority of barbaric over common civilized art, in the arrangement of patterns for carpet fabrics, better or more distinctly shown than in the Russian department. When one turns from the admirable rugs and hangings of "the frosty Caucasus" to the wretched, tufted carpet of Engalytscheff, of Bedischoff, rampant with flowers about ten times their real size, and of the crudest possible colouring, it is impossible not to recognize that one is as truly right in principle as the other is truly wrong. The main feature of the wrong in the one case, and the right in the other, consists in the error of the application of imitative art to a fabric, to a use, on a scale, and in a position for which it is totally unfitted, and in the converse. The moment one is impressed with the idea of walking or sitting upon what no person in his senses would think of walking or sitting upon, as I have before said, a painful sense of impropriety is experienced, proportioned in intensity to the vivacity with which this misapprehension of judicious design is expressed in the fabric.

Russian,  
especially  
Caucasian  
carpets.

The Greek mats and carpets are of Kidderminster make, in brilliant and often agreeable colours; very rough and effective, with bold stripes and mosaic patterns.

Greek car-  
pets.

There are scarcely any things worse in their way in the Spanish exhibition than the great Spanish carpets, coarsely imitating bad French designs.

Spanish  
carpets.

The Austrian carpets by Haas and Sons are, for the most part, excellent both in design and execution. The chief Austrian carpets (notably by

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

Haas und  
Söhne.

Algerian  
carpets.

Beautiful  
Cashmerian  
carpets.

Prussian  
carpets.

specimen of these manufacturers, the reproduction of an ancient Persian carpet which belonged to Peter the Great, and intended for the Imperial saloon of the new opera at Vienna, is a perfect *tour de force* for closeness of texture and minute rendering of complicated form. Being specially adapted for candlelight effect, it shows to great disadvantage by day; but I can readily believe that, seen by the light for which it was intended, its effect would be admirable. Indeed, it presents a very valuable lesson to the student in this particular, as it will be at once recognized that the addition of the yellow artificial light will darken the greens of the carpet by bringing out the complementary blue, and lighten the red so as to bring it to a just balance with the green; it will also, of course, take the predominating yellow tint of the carpet by daylight out of the whole by intensifying, by "simultaneous contrast," the complementary blues and purples.

Nothing in the Exhibition, after India and Persia, is better than are the Algerian small carpets and rugs. The colouring is most agreeable, and the make of the carpet, with its long and well tied-in tufts of wool, is calculated to ensure extraordinary durability in wear. This excellence in long-tufted carpeting, rugs, divan coverings, &c. is admirably maintained by the class of carpets shown in the Tunisian department, and made of the long wool of "Deridi." Of the still finer wool of Cashmere there is a "tapis de luxe," lined and fringed with silk, worthy of the most luxurious harem, exhibited by the Prince Mahomed, son of his Excellency Mustapha Khaznadur. I have been informed by one who has long resided in the East that excellent models of Persian and Indian design as applied to carpetings are constantly circulating throughout the southern and western Mohammedan countries, through the sales of their fine "praying carpets" by pilgrims from the far East, whose means becoming exhausted at Mecca, are obliged to part with all their "personalities" in order to find the means requisite to take them home again.

Amongst the carpets of other materials than wool and cotton the most curious of all are two, made of various skins and furs, shown by Greeve and Son, of Amsterdam. The design of one of these is really clever in its way.

The Prussian carpets are unimportant, although one exhibitor (Schoeller et Fils, of Düren,) shows a readiness to adopt some of the mechanical processes lately perfected in England. The remainder of what is exhibited is principally rather hard and dry imitation of Turkish work, the best being by Gevers and Schmidt, of Schmiedeberg.

From Belgium much better things might have been expected than have been sent. The Royal Manufactory at Brussels of the carpets of Tournay scarcely maintains its old reputation. Considering that Tournay is essentially the father of Kidderminster (the Brussels carpet trade having been introduced into the latter place from the former only about the middle of the last century), one is forced to recognize that the child has wonderfully outgrown the parent. I would, however, except the productions of Braquinié, of Inglemunster.

We now come to the two countries in which the keenest competition for ascendancy in the general carpet trade is carried on—France and England—and on the relative artistic position of which I have already made some remarks.

In France, the Imperial products of the “Savonnerie,” an establishment incorporated with that of the Gobelins for tapestry, naturally holds the first place. The Savonnerie and the finest of the Aubusson carpets are hand-worked, exactly on the same principle as our old Axminster carpets, but with certain innovations borrowed from the Gobelins practice. The leading specimen of the manufacture is a largish carpet hanging in the middle of one end of the Sèvres and Gobelins court. The design, which is of a singularly harmonious colouring, is founded on old French models, wrought out with the greatest taste by M. Dieterle, perhaps the most distinguished living ornamentist in France. In execution there is nothing else to compare with it; but its very excellence is its greatest drawback. It is too fine a picture to tread on. Interlacing hoops and flowers, and arrows and ribbons (if my memory serves me) are figured in lineal, and coloured in aerial, perspective with perfect verisimilitude. Every curve is struck with the greatest accuracy, the gradation of tone is almost imperceptible, and yet the result is neither good picture, good carpet, nor good ornament. In fact, it can scarcely, I think, be looked upon as other than a costly mistake. I have been, perhaps, especially hard upon this product, but it is only because it is so alluring in its elegance and harmony of tone, as it hangs in a place of honour, that it becomes a “special snare” to the unwary. Carpets are also occasionally made at the Imperial establishment at Beauvais, although the bulk of what is produced at that celebrated establishment more nearly resembles Gobelins tapestry, and is almost exclusively used for furniture covering. In the matter of designs for carpets, M. Clerget, an orientalist, *à la mode de Paris*, exercised some twenty years ago a salutary influence. This, however, seems to have died out, although he is, I believe, still living, and a wilful sort of

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

Belgian  
carpets.

French  
carpets.

Those of the  
Imperial  
Manufactory  
of the Savon-  
nerie,

and of Beau-  
vais.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

Those of  
Sallandrouze  
(père et fils).

confusion has established itself between designs fitted for tapestries and those suited for carpets; in other words, between designs suitable for vertical and those fitting for horizontal surfaces.

The well-known house of Sallandrouze (*père et fils*) fairly sustains its well earned position at the head of the French carpet manufacture as far as dexterity is concerned, although "discretion" may not be regarded as its leading characteristic. It seems, indeed, hardly possible to imagine that the same firm can produce goods varying so absolutely in principle as do the bulk of what it exhibits in the florid old, and still more florid modern, French style, and the specially quiet and agreeable Persian-patterned carpet which is in the centre of the side of the Limoges china court. One of their large carpets, although a little vulgar, narrowly escapes being successful. It is entirely spoilt by an uncomfortable damped blotting-paper coloured centre panel, with some doves and a vase relieved upon it. Upon the whole, one feels most anxious to see this respectable old house, which has worthily sustained the reputation of Aubusson since its factories passed from Royal direction into good commercial and self-supporting hands, take a more independent line, so far as its carpets are concerned. It has too long only done well what it has been accustomed to do well, without marching with or leading a return to more wholesome principles of design for carpets.

Laurent.

In point of quiet good taste, the best goods in the French portion of the Exhibition are those, for the most part in imitation of oriental fabrics, by the house of Bernard Laurent, of Amiens. These are jacquard woven pile carpets of the most vivid and yet very fairly harmonised colouring. In one small and beautiful rug a very happy effect is produced by throwing in a few compartments in silk. The Amiens carpets of the house of Deletoile are also, with certain exceptions, highly commendable. Some of the large carpets, in imitation of Turkish, of the house of Foye Devenne, are excellent; but two of their specimens, one with very large circles and octagons, and the other with very raw-looking flowers, exhibit misapplication of considerable manufacturing skill. If, as is no doubt the case, flowers cannot be executed in any ordinary qualities of carpeting except upon a ridiculously magnified scale, they ought not to be attempted. It is, indeed, somewhat difficult to say when or how they should be.

Deletoile.

Foye De-  
venne.

Rozé Abra-  
ham.

The large house of Rozé Abraham, of Tours, exhibits very good quiet Persian patterns; and yet, as if to show how hard it is to abandon bad ways and traditions, adds to

them three rugs which, for "loud" pattern and colour, are amongst the worst things of the sort in the Exhibition.

Amongst the private manufacturers of Aubusson who rival MM. Sallandrouze, MM. Eroc (père et fils), who spin their own yarn, exhibit both moquette carpets and plain woven ones in which Persian and the Gobelins traditions fight for predominance over the fortunes of the house. The latter appear to have the best of it; for the place or honour in the Faïence court is given to a sickly but ambitious specimen of the old French style, while many exceedingly harmonious carpets of Persian style hold inferior places on each side of it. They, too, have some fiercely bad rugs.

Masure and Lourthiois, of Tourcoing (Nord), have executed some fairly good patterns, rich and quiet, for the well-known Parisian agency house of Sallandrouze.

There is a clever kaleidoscopic pattern on a blue ground, Daumezou, by Daumezou, of Nismes; but the rest of the exhibitors in the "Maroquinerie" court show nothing in any way remarkable.

For a display of many of the worst faults of design, as applied to carpets, the visitor may be referred to the great gridiron upon a crimson ground manufactured by Clement Gravier, of Nismes. J. Vayson, of Abbeville, carries the Vayson. mistaken application of pictorial art to the carpet trade to nearly its *acme* in his portrait of the Emperor in monochrome. It is not to be denied that in this work very good manufacturing dexterity has been displayed; but what is still wanting, after all, serves only to demonstrate the inexpediency of attempting such *tours de force*. The insufficiency of the pictorial rendering of the subject is naturally heightened into the region of the absurd by the reflection that it would be impossible to use this production as a carpet without literally "trampling under foot" what the present régime, at least, of Frenchmen are "bound to obey and serve" in the highest degree. The large carpet of this manufacturer is one of the most ponderous and remarkable specimens of Jacquard weaving in the building. The mounting of the loom for this must have been most tedious and costly, and it is only to be regretted that so much trouble should have been wasted upon so unsatisfactory a pattern. I have dwelt longer upon the productions of this firm than I might have done if it had held a lower rank in French industry; but when such productions are contributed by a house displaying with its products no less than 18 gold and 12 silver medals, gained in various industrial contests, it indicates an exceptionally low standard of popular taste for a country so far advanced in civilization as France.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.  
—  
Eroc.

Masure and  
Lourthiois.

Clement  
Gravier.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

Requillart,  
Roussel, and  
others.

The English  
carpets by  
Taplin,  
Beall, and  
Co.

Upon the whole, in this class the manufacturers of Aubusson make a rare display, in which "what to eat, drink, and avoid," in point of industrial art, is pretty equally balanced; but, while we criticise, it is impossible to help admiring the productions of houses such as those of Duplan and Co., Requillart, Roussel, and Chocquel, Braquenie, and, last, not least, Sallandrouze. Everyone must feel that, with all its faults, it is a great industry, worthily represented.

The English exhibitors suffer much more than the French from their floor-coverings being hung as wall-coverings, since the former wisely do not emulate the pictorial example generally set them by the latter. There is, however, one notable exception; and, as that constitutes the only serious example of heterodoxy left amongst the British, it may be well to dispose of it at once.

Messrs. Taplin, Beall, and Co. have employed, no doubt, an able artist to design for them some very ambitious pictures intended to rival Gobelins tapestries at cheap rates. These pictures have been executed with extraordinary skill by Messrs. Templeton, and they are, to all intents and purposes, carpets. Whether they are intended for covering walls or floors, they are alike open to the very grave objection that the process of chenille weaving is inapplicable to the reproduction of high art. The very basis of the system (which involves, 1st, the reduction of all designs to a system of squaring; 2nd, a translation from that squaring into the gauze woven striped cloth, which when cut up forms the pile weft; and, 3rd, the use of that pile weft with such perfectly even tension as to make each colour find its place exactly with reference to the warp-strings of the fabric) is adverse to the chances of a true rendering of subtle expression or the preservation of dignity. To have attempted to depict the 12 apostles, the Queen, and the Emperor of the French, &c., by such a process, on a grand colossal scale, is a climax of audacity which it would have been better never to have aimed at; such ambitious failures serve only to justify the shrugs which they receive from all who know how such subjects ought to be depicted. If unsatisfactory as hangings, of course such products would be ten times worse as carpets.

When we turn from Mr. Templeton on somebody else's platform to Mr. Templeton on his own, the aspect of matters is, happily, entirely changed. I have already and fully spoken of his merits as an inventor, and of his indomitable energy and perseverance, and have only now to record my satisfaction, as an artist, with all of his products manufactured from Mr. Owen Jones's design. They are in every way

Templeton.

creditable to British industry, and thoroughly justify the gold medal awarded to Mr. Templeton. They are possibly cast in a too uniformly low tone, but it is far better that they should err slightly on this side than upon the other. One of them, with a deep blue ground, is especially admirable. Of this old style—*i.e.*, a free rendering of French designs—Mr. Templeton exhibits one good specimen, manufactured, no doubt, at great cost, and involving much labour and ingenuity to produce, but not altogether to my taste. Such carpets, however, still find a very large sale, and I am told that for export it is of no use manufacturing anything more quiet. For the American market, the manufacturers declare that the more glaring their carpets are the better they are liked.

Next to Mr. Templeton in order of merit I should certainly place Messrs. Brinton and Lewis, of Kidderminster, also gold medallists, who contribute admirable specimens of a kind of carpet of the chenille genus, but said to be woven with certain novel appliances of which they are commencing the current manufacture at Kidderminster. The texture of these carpets is of the description called patent Axminster, and they certainly exhibit a quality and closeness of substance hitherto not attained, I believe, in any other fabric.

The great advantages these goods are alleged to possess are:—“Delicacy and perfection of pattern, with clearness and softness of detail; solidity in the pile and luxuriousness of tread as a floor-covering; great substance and durability in the wear; the introduction of unlimited colour, affording extensive combination of effect; and, lastly, what is of the highest importance in the demand for first-class fabrics, the capability of being made in the entire piece, without seam, for saloons of any dimension and shape.”

The name “Indian Axminster” has been selected for these goods, as the fabric represents the texture and effect of East Indian carpets, with a complete accuracy of detail seldom found in those goods, combined with the luxurious perfection of the Axminster fabric. Messrs. Brinton and Lewis have been greatly assisted in their preparation for the introduction of this valuable class of carpet, the pile of which is at least three quarters of an inch in length, by the judicious advice of Dr. Forbes Watson and Dr. Dresser.

The artistic impulse especially given by the latter will no doubt retain the “bloom” and beauty of the patterns in which the Indian Axminsters will be chiefly manufactured.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.  
—

Brinton and  
Lewis.

How aided  
by Drs. Wat-  
son and  
Dresser.

The bulk of Messrs. Brinton and Lewis's other exhibited goods consist of various carpets of "Wilton make," woven in widths by patent power-loom, and so sewn up, with borders, &c., as to give all the effect of a carpet specially designed for any apartment.

Dr. Dresser has been good enough to inform me that, out of Messrs. Brinton and Lewis's collection, the white-ground carpet with drab shadow and crimson arabesque scroll, is intended for large saloons, where two-breadth designs are usually preferred, as giving the greater scope for the artist's treatment of a massive subject in relief like this, of flowers and foliage, treated in self colours (*ton sur ton*), with heavy scrollwork to form the setting or panelwork of the whole. The Persian or Turkey carpet next in order is similarly intended for large compartments, but is composed on the principle of flat treatment in design and deep rich tone of colour, with combinations of blue, green, and scarlet, giving different effects in the various figures on the red ground. The medallion centre of this carpet is to occupy the middle of a room, with the other figures grouped around it, the border outside being used to complete the whole, and producing the effect of a carpet in one piece. The crimson Italian scroll carpet is designed for smaller rooms where dark and moderate-sized figures are preferred. The introduction of white ground into the border of this carpet is with the special intention of giving relieving effect to the pervading weight of crimson shades. The browns are to contrast with the deeper tints of crimson used.

The fourth and last made-up carpet is after the best examples of flat treatment applied to the forms of 19th century decorative art. The colours are worked on the principle of illumination to the neutral ground shade, and the conventional forms and the colours used therewith allow of this carpet being equally before the eye from whatever point it is surveyed. The entire effect is bright, and yet the livelier colours are kept in due subordination to the rest. This carpet is for the moderate-sized rooms and libraries of British and continental houses. Of these the second appeared to me to be the most satisfactory in point of design, although there is somewhat too even a balance in it between the red and the blue.

Messrs. Watson and Bontor, and Mr. Lapworth, both well known as dealers of great taste and good judgment, exhibit very fine carpets, the former principally of Indian manufacture, and the latter a real Axminster of the best possible quality. I am informed that Mr. Lapworth is now

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

Henderson.  
Jackson and  
Graham.

Woodward,  
Palmer, and  
Rudford.

Morton and  
Humphries.  
Boyle and  
Smith, and  
Southwell.

Mr. Willis's  
excellent  
rugs.

Absence of  
Brussels  
carpeting.

the proprietor of the celebrated manufactory at Wilton, which used to be so ably conducted by Mr. Blackmore. Messrs. Henderson, of Durham, show very well with a good rich beaded pattern and quiet diaper and border. Messrs. Jackson and Graham show a noble carpet made for them from a design by Mr. Owen Jones. This is satisfactory in every respect, except that the rectangular framing to some of the panelled forms catches the eye somewhat too readily. Messrs. Woodward, Palmer, and Rudford have made a considerable effort to obtain characteristic designs, but, whether accident has misapplied the labels or the designer has misapprehended the styles, certain it is that what is conspicuously labelled "Pompadour" is more like Gothic than anything else, and "Japanese" is rather Greek. What the "Gothic design, French colouring," may really be meant for I could not make out, as it mainly consisted of a straggling kind of Italian scrollwork on a white ground. It is not that the designs are really bad, but the high-sounding titles are a mistake.

Amongst other manufacturers who exhibit in "admirable form" may be mentioned Messrs. Morton and Humphries, of Kidderminster; Boyle and Smith, of London; and Southwell, of Bridgenorth.

As the maker of a specialty—Persian and Smyrna rugs—Mr. Willis, of Kidderminster, occupies a most distinguished place, his exhibition showing much enterprise and the best possible taste. Mr. Harvey's designs for Mr. Willis are admirable.

In generalizing upon the English exhibition, one cannot but be struck by the absence of that class of carpeting in which for merit and extent of manufacture we stand without rivals. I mean the good Brussels carpet of commerce. Our cheap carpets, too, are scarcely at all represented, while in Yorkshire, the north of England generally, and Scotland, we produce enormous quantities of such goods at the lowest price and of the best quality. It is, of course, in the nature of such exhibitions that *tours de force* should be represented, while current manufactures "hide their heads," but, remembering this tendency, critics should not hastily infer that the staple manufactures of the country are degenerating because they may not appear in redundancy at the Paris Exposition.

We now come to the admirable tapestries and other furniture stuffs, of which the quantity overwhelms as the quality delights us. To begin, of course, with the Imperial establishment of the Gobelins, its importance in the history of industrial art demands that a few paragraphs, founded on recent works on the subject, should be dedicated to a brief

Tapestries.

The Gobe-  
lins.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

Early tape-  
stries in  
France.

Under  
Francis I.

survey of the history of the manufactory, which is, indeed, little else than an epitome of the whole history of the manufacture.

Setting aside the archæology of the subject, so far as relates to the Middle Ages, the details of which may be readily found in the pages of Potier, Jubinal, and Viollet Le Duc, we may assume, as a *point de départ*, that, until the reign of Francis I., tapestries and carpets were made in France by private enterprise alone. The *haute-lissiers*, the Saracens, and the blanket-makers had carried on their manufactures under the shelter of privileges granted them by the king or provosts, but it was the Flemings, by their manufacturing skill, and the Italians, through their greater dexterity as draughtsmen and designers, who mainly brought the art of making tapestries to perfection.

Francis I. collected the most able weavers he could find, either in France or in Flanders and Italy, the two countries in which this branch of industry had been carried farthest, and established them at Fontainebleau, under the direction of the superintendent of royal buildings, and of Salomon de Herbaines weaver to the king. These artists, for whose use silk, gold, and silver thread were lavishly expended, produced splendid hangings from the designs and cartoons of Primaticcio.

The civil and religious wars of the following reigns were as fatal to royal establishments as to private enterprise, and, amidst the continuous troubles of "the league," the successors of Henry II. were unable to devote much money to any other purpose than the support of their armies.

Under  
Henry IV.

About the year 1600 Henry IV. commenced the re-establishment in France of those manufactories for the production of furniture and decorations for the royal palaces which had fallen into decay during the two preceding years, although he encountered in so doing the strenuous opposition of his sagacious minister, Sully, an opposition thoroughly justified by the general exhaustion and poverty of the country. He began by establishing his weavers, Laurent and Dubourg, in a house in the Faubourg St. Antoine, vacated by the expulsion of the Jesuits. On the return of the latter he transferred the students of these master weavers to the galleries of the Louvre, and established there a goodly gathering of masters in art, painters, sculptors, engravers of precious stones, clockmakers, &c.

The chief *haute-lisse* weavers remained but a short time as "compound householders" in the Louvre. Two hundred Flemish workmen were collected and put under their direction, and the manufacture, speedily established in the

Palais des Tourelles, was subsequently transferred to an hotel in the Rue des Varennes. Henry IV., to encourage his protégés, gave them extensive privileges, but his premature death prevented the full development of his projects. His son, Louis XIII., though the founder of the house of the *Savonnerie*, allowed the establishment of his predecessors for tapestry-weaving to fall into decay. The only active steps he took in its favour was continuing to the sons of Mark Comans and Francis Laglanche, master-weavers, the privileges granted to them by Henry IV.

Some tapestry made during this reign (and no doubt in the manufactory of which I am speaking) representing the miracles of Saints Crispin and Crispinianus, was, apparently, ordered by the guild of shoemakers of Paris for the chapel of their corporation in Notre Dame. The struggling trade made little head in the troublesome times which succeeded the death of Louis XIII., and it is probable that the nominal patronage of an impoverished Court was rather an impediment than an aid. The weavers suffered, artists languished, and the long wars of the minority of Louis XIV. nearly ruined them. On his ultimate accession to the throne, between the earnest wishes of the King and the able conduct of Colbert, in a few years all the Royal manufactories were reinstated, and their prosperity exceeded that of their best days under preceding Sovereigns.

The great Lebrun, first painter to the King, directed the establishment of the *Savonnerie*, at Chaillot, in which Philippe Lourdet had caused children taken from the hospitals to work. Hinart was appointed to take charge of the factory at Beauvais, -where furniture-stuffs and hangings were made. The manufactories of Felletin and Aubusson for carpets, &c., owed to the liberality of the King a painter and a dyer, maintained at his expense.

The name "Gobelins," as a designation for tapestry of the highest class, is derived from some former dyers of that name, who carried on their business on the edge of the little River Bièvre, at Paris, on the site of the present Imperial establishment, in 1450, or, as some say, not till the reign of Francis I.

It was not, however, until the seventeenth century that the name of the old dyer, Giles Gobelins, was applied to this tapestry. At this date the family of the Gobelins having retired from business, their house passed into other hands, and was rented by the Brothers Cannaye, who, in addition to dyeing, engaged in the manufacture of tapestry. In all probability Jean Liansen made for them, for the first time, tapestry on the *haute-lisse*, or vertical warp.

Under Louis  
XIII.Under Louis  
XIV.Establish-  
ment of  
the Gobe-  
lins,

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

under Col-  
bert's pro-  
tection,

as a Royal  
manufactory  
for art  
industries of  
all kinds;

and under  
Lebrun's  
direction;

under  
Mignard's.

On the re-establishment of the Royal châteaux, Colbert conceived the idea of decorating them in a manner worthy of the magnificence of their architecture. Choosing the most talented of every profession and trade, he united them in one grand establishment, and gave them apprentices and pupils to study under them.

To extend this establishment he persuaded the King, in 1662 or 1663, to purchase a portion of the building originally occupied by the dyers Gobelins. The augmented establishment was so carried on, from the year 1667, under the style of "The Royal Manufactory of Tapestry and Furniture for the Crown;"—Colbert and the chief painter personally assuming, with the King, its direction. By his edicts published at this time it is evident that it was not simply a factory for tapestry that Louis XIV. created. It was a vast studio in which all that can be comprehended under the term "furniture" was made. Two hundred and fifty master weavers wove rich tapestries for which the King's chief painter and his pupils had given designs, and for which the able Jacques Kercoven had dyed the wools or the silks. Sculptors in metal and goldsmiths forged and chased bronze into lamps, sconces, brackets, and candelabra in styles suitable to correspond with the Gobelins and Beauvais hangings. Cabinetmakers carved, turned, and gilded wood furniture after the fashion of the Venetian "magnificenze" then so popular.

Florentines, directed by Ferdinando del Megliorini, collected marbles, agates, lapis-lazuli, &c. for making beautiful mosaics, ornamented with birds, flowers, and fruits, remains of which are still to be met with in the tables in several of the palaces of the time of Louis XIV. Even the very door-locks and window fastenings became chefs-d'œuvre of execution made from the designs of the fertile Lebrun, and, at a later period, of the still more fertile Berain—"dessinateur des menus plaisirs du Roi." The superintendence of Lebrun, which lasted from 1663 to 1690, was an era of prosperity for the Gobelins. He caused pictures designed by him to be accurately copied in wool, such as "The Battles of Alexander," "The History of Louis XIV.," "The Elements," "The Twelve Months of the Year," "The Life of Moses," &c. The greater number of these subjects were embellished with ornaments in gold thread. Many other works were executed, after designs by Van der Meulen, Joart, Bolo, Baptiste, Auguier, and other contemporary artists.

In 1690 Lebrun died, and Mignard succeeded him as chief painter to the King and director of the Gobelins.

The practice of his profession engrossing too much of his time, the King gave him as coadjutors La Chapelle and Bressé, architect and controller of the Royal buildings.

The first years of the new administration were fruitful. A school of design was established, directed by Tuby, Coysevox, and Sebastian Leclerc, and very important works were commenced; but the reverses which took place towards the end of his reign compelled Louis XIV. to reserve his money for the defence of his country. When peace was ultimately re-established, the production of the Gobelins became more brisk; but from this time the "Royal Manufactory for Crown Furniture" gradually lost its specially comprehensive character, to become only a manufactory of tapestry and carpets. The painters, sculptors, goldsmiths, and workers in mosaic gradually disappeared; it was no longer a school of arts and luxurious manufactures, as when under Lebrun. Through the penury of the Treasury, in 1694, the prosperity of the manufacture declined, and in the following year a number of workmen and pupils were discharged. Under the reign of Louis XV. the factories were closed, and the works totally stopped for a time, to be taken up again and cherished at fitful intervals.

The chief pieces executed at this date, and indeed until the end of the reign of Louis XVI., were The Four Seasons, after Mignard; the History of Esther, and that of Jason and Medea, after De Troy; many scenes from the New Testament, after Jouvenet; copies of pictures from the Vatican, after Boullouque; the Twelve Months, after Lucas Van Leyden; the History of Moses, after Poussin; a set of curtains in silk, with a gold ground, after Boullouque, Baptiste Monayer, De Fontenay, Audran, and others; eight scenes from the New Testament, after Restout; the History of Mark Antony and Cleopatra, a set of allegorical pictures for the Chancellor's residence, after Coypel, Restout, and others; eight Indian subjects, after Desportes and others; the Field Sports of Louis XV., in four pictures, after Oudry; twenty-one subjects from Don Quixote, by Coypel; a set of mythological and pastoral subjects, by Boucher; the Siege of Calais and the Taking of Paris, after Barthélémy; many subjects from the history of Henry IV., after Vincent and Le Barbier; the Continence of Bayard, after Du Rameau; the Assassination of Admiral Coligny, after Suvée; the Death of Leonard de Vinci, after Menageot; and the Triumph of Amphitrite, after Faravel. The tapestry of Esther, and that of Jason and Medea, given to the King of England, are said to be still at Windsor Castle.

Successes  
under Louis  
XV. and  
XVI.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.  
—  
Improver-  
ments.

In 1749 great changes were made in the looms. The cartoons were no longer cut up and placed under the warp but behind the workman, where they could be clearly seen. The picture was traced on a sheet of tracing-paper, which was fastened by hand in the same way that the design had formerly been fixed. These improvements were introduced by Neilson, one of the ablest "heads of departments" who has ever laboured in the old factory on the banks of "the Bièvre." In spite of his improvements, and others devised by the ingenious Vaucanson, the Royal Manufactory suffered about this time greatly from dissensions, which arose between Oudry, the painter, who virtually acted as manager, and other artists, whose works were being reproduced under, as it was alleged, his misdirection. These dissensions were happily put an end to by the appointment of Boucher to fill Oudry's place, upon the death of the latter, in 1753.

During this time the department of the Savonnerie, like that of the Gobelins, followed the taste and partook of the style of the period, and the works of Louis XIV. were already greatly modified from their old noble style, when the political struggles of the end of the last century almost threatened the very existence of these beautiful creations. Scarcely had these sad days for art arrived, before hands were laid on the chefs-d'œuvre of the past upon the excuse that they exhibited emblems of the old form of government; and a jury of artists and other "sans culottes" was formed consisting of Prudhon, Duneux, Percier, Bitaubé, Moette, Legouvé; Mouvel, the actor; Vincent, the historical painter; Belle, director of the Gobelins; and Duvivière, director of the Savonnerie.

This jury had the audacity to condemn—for singular reasons, principally political—a long list of works, in the creation of which some of them had aided. As to the Savonnerie, that was still worse; there they sacrificed all the finest patterns and productions, except two harmless carpets with flowers. The manufactory which under Louis XIV. numbered 300 workmen and weavers could, in the depth of its tribulation, obtain only 46 signatures to the following sad petition:—

"Citizen Minister.—We venture again to lay our misery before you. The National Treasury does not make the payments you have ordered for our benefit. For 125 days of salary due to us we have only received five days. Without clothes, food, or credit it is impossible to live. We are in despair, and we beg you to give us the means of living elsewhere if you cannot support us here."

But ruin

under the  
revolution.

Until the reign of Louis XVI. a settled system was followed for executing hangings in sets. Each subject formed a suite of tapestry of different heights and widths adapted to the different rooms which it was intended to decorate in succession.

For some years of the reign of Louis XVI. tapestry had been made by contract, there being two "haute-lisse" contractors and one "basse-lisse." The King paid on delivery for the tapestry ordered; he lent the factories and looms, and advanced to the contractors the linen web, the wool, and the silk. The revolution of '89 led to great changes in this manufacture; in 1791 workmen were paid by the year, and in this year also were suppressed the various corps d'états which Colbert had established for the sole manufacture of tapestry.

In 1792, at the suggestion of the Minister Roland, the school of design established by Colbert was abolished, and, though the factories were not altogether closed, payments were suspended, as we have seen by the unhappy workmen's petition, during the political agitation which distracted the close of the 18th century.

This disorganization lasted but a short time, since in the year 1802 the manufacture was re-established, and the school of design reopened. A few of the artists returned, but pupils did not re-enter in numbers until the year 1809.

In 1805 Napoleon I. made up his mind to revive the manufacture, and to adopt its products as the chief decoration of his palaces. He began with the Gallery of Diana at the Tuilleries, and speedily caused to be set in hand at the establishment some 20 or more large pictures representing the principal historical scenes in which he had played the leading part. A practical school of dyeing was founded; and chemistry, in the honoured persons of Chaptal and Beathollet, was brought to the assistance of the director of that school, the talented and useful M. Roard, a worthy pendant to Brongniart, at the rival Imperial establishment at Sèvres.

Under the Restoration the Royal manufacture was well sustained, and amongst a series more or less specially devoted to the glorification of the house of Bourbon there show out with peculiar lustre the noble reproductions of the Medicis' Rubens' pictures of the Louvre. Louis Philippe in his turn proved himself a right Royal patron, admirably completing the works commenced by his predecessors; and up to the present time a steady progress has been maintained in every department, reflecting the greatest credit on M. Chevreuil, the head of the dyeing establishment, and on M. Badin, the

Details of  
establish-  
ment.Revival  
under Na-  
poleon I.Under the  
restoration,

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WYATT ON  
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&c.

and present  
state of ex-  
cellence  
under the  
direction  
of M. Badin,  
and with  
the aid of  
M. Dieterle.

present "director," with whom I enjoyed several opportunities of discussing the magnificent figure made by the Gobelins establishment on the present great occasion. He assured me of the lively interest at all times manifested in the productions of the Gobelins by the Emperor Napoleon III., and warmly acknowledged the great assistance he had now for many years received in the artistic department from my respected colleague on the juries of the last three universal exhibitions, M. Dieterle.

In the above notices I have been constrained to omit much of very great interest. My deficiencies may, however, be easily made up for by consulting the excellent "Notice "Historique sur les Manufactures Impériales de Tapisseries "des Gobelins et de Tapis de la Savonnerie, par A. L. Lacordaire, Directeur," &c.; "Paris, 1853."

I do not purpose entering in this report into the technical processes by which the Gobelins tapestries are produced; partly because they may be so much better understood from even a hasty visit to the manufactory (which is one of the well-known sights of Paris) than they could be from any written description, and partly because they have been so admirably and so frequently described by others, and notably in the above-mentioned work by M. Lacordaire.

Processes of  
dyeing the  
wools

A few words, however, on that part of the subject which generally escapes the notice of the visitor to the Gobelins—the arrangements made for dyeing all the wools used for the Imperial tapestries, carpets, and furniture stuffs at the present time—may not be out of place or useless. I therefore condense, in great part from the excellent description of the establishment given in the first three numbers of M. Turgand's fine work "Les Grandes Usines" a few particulars of the current practice.

The dyers' workshop in the Gobelins manufactory is, without doubt, the first dyeing establishment in the world; not, of course, from its extent, but on account of the perfection of the processes and the infinite number and systematic preservation of the "nuances" or shades of tints therein produced. M. Chevreuil, member of the Institute, is now, and has long been, its director, with M. Decaux as sub-director. The value of the treatise by the former, "On the Simultaneous Contrast of Colour," is acknowledged by every artist. The workshop is simple, being composed of a drying-room, of a large chamber with coppers for scalding and dyeing, and of a subterranean passage leading to seven furnaces, in which the colouring liquids are boiled. Under the windows flow the sluggish waters of the Bièvre, grey opaque, noisome, creeping slowly between two stone quays

and with its slimy waters charged with all the refuse which flows from the various manufactories upon the little river's banks.

The following is the process carried on in the dyeing-room:—The wool is mostly Kentish, and is spun at Nonancourt, in the department of the Eure. After having been selected and inspected with the greatest care by the firm of Vulliamy (the agents through whom they are procured), the fleeces are classified, on their arrival at the Gobelins, into very fine fleeces for the Savonnerie and Beauvais work, and those a little less fine, and ultimately differently spun, for converting into Gobelins tapestry. When the yarns have been examined by M. Perrey, chief of the works, they are submitted to a graduated cleansing, according to the colours which they are to receive. Passed through whitewash, subcarbonate of soda, or simply through bran, they are given more or less affinity for this or that tint, according to the duration of the proceeding and the nature of the liquid. The scouring operation requires watching with great care, especially during the bath of subcarbonate of soda, of which the temperature can never exceed a certain fixed limit, without a risk of spoiling the wool. The skeins, passed over long sticks called "lisoirs," are then plunged into square boilers of iron, which hold the mordant, containing more or less alum or tartaric acid, according to the dyes required. After this they are plunged into a bath of colour. The dyeing of the Gobelins has nothing in common with that of establishments which produce some a single colour, as blue or black, others various tints, but limited in range of shade. Such dyeing as this could be executed by inferior workmen; but to produce not only the immense variety of colours, but the twenty or thirty shades of each colour, required for this manufacture, demands the employment of real artist dyers. At the Gobelins the object is to produce only colours of a "good dye"—that is, permanent or "fast" colours—the difficulty is therefore much greater than in the case of most private firms, who only strive after effect. It is chiefly in the clear colours that it is important not to make a blunder. Sad to say, a great number of beautiful pieces made at the beginning of the nineteenth century have been simply ruined by the decomposition of certain dyes, which have turned quite brown, whilst others have faded altogether. Thus the three or four years' work of an artist may be rendered useless by the neglect or mistake of a dyer; but under the skilful direction of M. Chevreuil this danger no longer exists; and the chef-d'œuvres now produced will, it is confidently believed, last as long as organic matter can be expected to exist

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.  
described.

Arrange-  
ments

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.

as to tints  
by M. Chev-  
reuil.

How fol-  
lowed by  
dyers.

without losing their value by change of hue. Each tint at the Gobelins, according to its position in M. Chevreuil's well known scale, is graduated in twenty-four tones, from the deepest to the most delicate—from deep red to blush rose tint, from the deepest slate gray to the lightest mother-of-pearl. Those skeins placed side by side in the order of their tints have a most pleasing effect. The gradation between skein and skein is little perceptible to anyone but a workman; but the dyer is not only able to observe it when out of the bath and dry, but even whilst still damp and soaking in the boilers.

The following is the process when only a simple colour is required. The bath is charged with the deepest colour of the scale required; the dyer, having placed upon his sticks the skeins which are intended to be of the deepest tint, plunges them into the bath, watches them, raises them up, hangs them on uprights at his right hand, replunges them in the copper, examines them, and notes the time during which they are soaked or dry. When he considers them to have reached the desired stage they are withdrawn and spread out, replunging them afterwards, if required. During this time the bath gets weaker and weaker; if it loses its colour too quickly more colouring matter is added. The liquid, becoming less charged with colour, gradually reaches so pale a tone that the twenty-fourth tint becomes almost white. It is in these later operations that a sure eye and skilful hand are required; the wool must be completely and thoroughly dyed, and yet at the same time possess the delicacy of shade required. Great care is shown in keeping the skeins, when fully dyed, well sorted, and yet easily accessible, so that there may be no impediment when the weaver has to select his woollen pigments for his day's work.

Beautiful  
display.

It is by such an elaborate system alone that works of the perfect pictorial success which must be recognized in the Gobelins tapestry of the present Exhibition can be achieved. Although no one piece in this year's display is as striking as "The Assumption," after Titian, exhibited in 1862, there is a far greater variety of style illustrated, with an even greater amount of harmonious colouring. The striking feature of the present Exhibition is the advantage which it has derived from the active co-operation of Mr. Dieterle, formerly artistic director of the Imperial manufactory at Sèvres. That distinguished artist's sensibility to the value of colour in shadow, and in what the French call "tons dégradés," is quite exceptional, and sets off the pictorial *tours de force* of the Imperial manufacture to the utmost.

Mainly  
through  
excellent  
work, and  
M. Dieterle's  
fine taste.

The largest piece of the Exhibition is a reproduction of the "Aurora" of the Villa Rospigliosi, by Guido. Perfect, no doubt, as a reproduction of the copy made in oil from the original fresco, this picture fails to render either the soft luminosity of a fresco or the intensity of tone of an oil picture, treated as an oil picture should be. In point of fact, it is almost impossible to satisfactorily copy a fresco in oil; and this tapestry being made from such an unsatisfactory translation of the original, fails, of course, in the particulars in which the mistranslation was defective. In the specimen which hangs beneath the Aurora, taken from the beautiful oil picture, by Titian, "Sacred and Profane Love," in the Borghese Gallery at Rome, a much more successful result has been obtained—all the richness and transparency of Titian's luminous palette having been perfectly reproduced. As a masterly illustration of how works of art of the highest character may be allied with the furnishing and hangings of a noble apartment, the student may be invited to carefully study the border by which M. Dieterle has surrounded this beautiful picture. On each side of the "Sacred and Profane Love" hang two *dessus de portes* (or, rather, will hang, for one of them is as yet incomplete), which unite the utmost brilliancy and gaiety of colour with perfect repose and absence of "garishness." The colour of the ground of these little panels is extraordinarily successful, and illustrates admirably a favourite theory of the artist that harmony can never be produced by the opposition of complementaries of equal intensity. In gradations of unequal intensities the eye feels an incessant sense of changeful illumination, which gives a life and grace opposed to the fixed and staring effect which more equal balancing of intensities invariably produces. It would occupy too much space in this report if I were to dwell too long upon the subtleties of polychromy which this year's exhibition of the Gobelins displays. The ordinary spectator will feel them, if he may be unable to trace and unravel them; and the intellectual exercise of picking them out for himself will be invaluable for the decorative artist. I cannot, however, refrain from dwelling upon the set of three hangings of Beauvais manufacture which hang over the left-hand side of the large carpet (by far the least successful of M. Dieterle's works) in the Sèvres Court. The arabesques, which are in a true French rather than Italian style, upon brilliant crimson, deep yellow, and dull sky-blue grounds, are among the most beautiful ever executed; and blend into the perfection of deep, rich, and yet vivid colouring. Too often papers, decorations, and tapestries only make rooms look uncomfortable; but I cannot imagine that a room hung

Analysis of  
merits.

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&c.

Beauvais  
tapestry.

Furniture  
stuffs.  
French.

with such tapestries as this, framed in ebony and gold, or in oak with ebony inlays, or in ebony with ivory inlays, or with walnut and mother-of-pearl inlays, could look otherwise than beautiful.

Around the Gobelins Court are arranged many sofas and chairs covered with tapestries made at the Imperial manufactory at Beauvais. They possess all the technical and artistic excellences of Gobelins tapestry, but it is impossible to feel that the designs are often suitable for the purposes to which the pieces of furniture they decorate are usually put.

In France alone we meet with attempts to rival the Imperial manufactures of the Gobelins and Beauvais, and in many cases the rivalry is well sustained. In this line of production for "furniture stuffs" the great house of Arnaud Gadin, of Nismes, stands conspicuous, and well merits the high reward the jury have given to it. At the same time the designs are, to my taste, certainly too pictorial for many of the uses to which the stuffs are applied. For instance, to find oneself sitting upon a pair of doves or darts, or a shepherd and shepherdess, or on a waterfall and ancient château, is not a happy although a by-no-means uncommon sensation in France. Even to be supposed to be crushing a bouquet of lovely flowers does not seem sensible. What is delightful as a picture mounted upon a screen is not so well on the back of a chair, and still less is it well when it forms the seat. These distinctions are not sufficiently felt by the French, who, in spite of their Republicanism and Imperialism, accept anything if it has but the "chic" of the ancient *régime*, and the consequence is that frequently much of their laborious dexterity is misapplied. Another point as to which they are often careless is to prepare for stuffs and hangings, which must be folded irregularly, designs which to have any meaning at all must be fully displayed. I mention these points in connection with such a house as that of Arnaud Gadin not because that house is specially guilty, but simply by way of a hint that the best and most celebrated are not free from reproach on this head. The houses of Walmez, Duboux and Dager, and of Berchoud and Guerreau, of Paris, and that of Bernard Laurent, of Amiens (the last especially in "étoffes épinglées"), contribute specimens in which the dyes are beautiful, and the Jacquard weaving unexceptionable. For perfect pictorial work, I was especially struck by the productions of Duplan and Co., of Paris. Requillart Roussel, and Chocquel, also of Paris, sustain by a brilliant display a well-earned reputation, as do Sallandrouze, Père et Fils, of Aubusson and Paris. They exhibit, much as they

have done before, stuffs for furniture beautifully executed, and portières covered with well-executed but misapplied flowers and garlands. Morceaux, of Paris, has some good and some very crude specimens. Mazure and Mazure of Roubaix, is very strong in reps, poplins, and damasks for upholstery.

In other countries than France, amongst the first of the exhibitors in the department of stuffs for curtains and upholstery generally must certainly be placed the house of Haas und Söhne, of Vienna. For good taste and perfect manufacture of every variety of this class of goods they stand conspicuous; and their display altogether is an honour to their country, and a profit also, since their various establishments give employment to no less than 2,500 workmen. Their portières and curtains are of especial merit, and the skill with which their designers manage to make the most of the silk they combine with wool in mixed fabrics is truly remarkable.

In stamped leather, or leather for covering furniture, there was no novelty. Dulud, in France, has rather fallen off; and an exhibitor named Boucart has advanced. I did not observe any good specimens from other countries.

The Algerian mats are good, though coarse. They are generally very low in tone, but harmonious; the colours rarely more than red and yellow. The Portuguese are satisfactory when in one or two ingrained colours; but when superficially dyed in bright colours the tints become fugitive and the general effect vulgar. The best of all the mats in the Exhibition are the Indian, both in make and appearance. The patterns are quite classical in style, and recall the best types of mosaics for flooring purposes. The grass mats from Palghaut, on the Malabar Coast, made by Koravan Mayau, are of extraordinary strength, durability, fineness, and flexibility. They may be bent almost double without injury, and in the hot weather they are very much used by the natives and Europeans (when once they have found out how comfortable they are) for sleeping upon. Other good Indian grass mats are made at Midnapore, near Calcutta.

In india-rubber and straw matting I noticed no particular novelty; the kamptulicon and linoleum of England were good, both in principle as to decoration and in manufacture. In oil-cloth and floor-cloth England appeared to me to stand *facile princeps*. Nairn of Kirkcaldy, Scotland, with Mr. Owen Jones's help, cuts a capital figure. Crosnier and Roze, in France, were respectable—the former especially in his small-patterned goods.

Stamped  
leather.Mats—  
Algerian,  
Portuguese,  
and Indian.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT ON  
CARPETS,  
TAPESTRY,  
&c.  
—  
Cotton furniture stuffs.

Indian pa-  
lampores.

J. S. Tem-  
pleton's  
hangings.  
Heilbron-  
ner's em-  
broderies.

In furniture stuffs of cotton there was a keen competition in the article of muslin curtains between the French (of Tarare and Saint Quentin) and the Swiss. After much controversy the scale turned, and I think justly, in favour of the former. In chintzes and cretonnes the French excelled, and in the patterns for the latter especially some admirable designs were exhibited, both from Rouen and Muhlhausen. The English in this department did not adequately put forth their strength.

The Indian palampores and block-printed cottons generally were excellent in pattern, as were the embroidered stuffs of all kinds adapted for hangings. The embroideries in silk from Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Algeria, the Caucasus, and China were all full of character, and presented most interesting types, both of form and colour, each harmonising perfectly with the furniture and architecture of the respective countries.

Upon the whole, taking all the sections of this class into account, I felt that the English had the best of it in carpets (both woven and felted), matting generally, kamptulicon, and floor-cloths, and the French in all the other principal departments.

The English furniture stuffs were far, however, from despicable. The mixed-fabric goods of several manufacturers, the hangings of J. and J. S. Templeton, the mediæval embroideries of Heilbronner, of Regent-street, and probably many other such specialties, possessed admirable features, both of manufacture and style; but, as they were classed for the most part in other sections, their good qualities will no doubt be pointed out by judges more competent to do justice to their merits than I can pretend to be.

## REPORT on PAPERHANGINGS.—(Class 19).—By M. DIGBY WYATT, Architect, and Juror for Class 15.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

IN industrial art, as in human life, where the will is freest, and the mode of action most facile, responsibility is greatest; and, as a consequence, discretion is most needed. To be discreet on all occasions is one of the rarest and most valuable qualities which the designer for manufactures can possibly possess. To know when to advance and when to retire, when to attract the spectator's eye and when to escape it, demands both judgment and experience in the highest degree. In few branches of production is the temptation to excess more active than in that of the manufacture of paper hangings. It costs the manufacturer no more, or at any rate little more, to be brilliant than to be sombre. His goods are, perhaps, least costly to produce when they are most glaring and crude.

In one important particular the decorative painter has a great advantage over the manufacturer of paperhangings. The former has a keynote, as it were, struck for his work, by the size, form, situation, mode and sources of lighting, and general aspect of the room he may be called upon to ornament. Sometimes he even knows the furniture belonging to the room. The latter, on the other hand, works, so to speak, in the dark. He can have no idea under what conditions what he makes may be used; he makes to sell, and, with the issue of his goods from his factory, but not with their applicability as decorations, his apparent responsibility, so far as taste is concerned, may be considered to be at an end. In the present day, I believe in the last particular he will find himself mistaken. If he habitually manufactures what may be very well made, but what looks ill under most circumstances, he will lose his reputation, and consequently money, and *vice versa*.

Taking into account the large cost of "getting up" an efficient decoration, it becomes, therefore, a real source of economy for the manufacturer to spend his money liberally in getting the best design possible. By employing the highest available talent to advise him before encountering his chief expense, he best ensures that that expense, when made, shall become a source of profit to him; but before even calling in an artist to assist him, it behoves him to make up his mind clearly as to the kind of thing it will be most profitable for him to manufacture.

Comparison  
between  
paperhang-  
ings and  
freehand  
painted  
de-  
coration.Difficulties  
which sur-  
round the  
manufac-  
turers of  
paperhang-  
ings.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

Value to  
them of the  
best possible  
artistic as-  
sistance,

which must,  
however,  
be rendered  
in a practical  
shape to be  
of real ser-  
vice.

How such  
assistance  
must be  
made prac-  
tical.

It is one of the most healthy signs for the prosperous future of British paperhanging that the chief exhibitors appear to have sought and obtained the assistance of educated and earnest artists on the present occasion ; and it is little less satisfactory to observe that there is an entire absence of the pitiful trade jealousy and secretiveness which lead usually to the suppression of the name or identity of the artist employed. There appears, in fact, to exist now an honourable rivalry amongst the manufacturers as to who shall "get hold" of the right and best man. "Our artist" is no longer confounded with "our traveller" or "our warehouseman" ; but he is put forward as responsible for his own share in the productions of the house, to receive praise if they are good, or blame if they are bad.

It is of no use, however, employing even the best talent in the production of what will not sell ; and of that the manufacturer must be the best judge. The artist may best know what *ought* to sell, the manufacturer knows what *will* sell. Both employ their energies to the best advantage when they combine to produce at once what does sell and what ought to sell ; and unless they work together to this end, production is limited either to the pandering to fashion of a passing moment or to the manufacture of unsaleable goods. The great object at the present moment should be to convert change into progress. A shifting public demands novelty, and will have it. Recognize the necessity and give the novelty, not in the form of a transition from one "conceit" to another, but in the form of more beauty, better balance of parts, and purer colouring than any to which the eye of the public has been heretofore accustomed.

It is of course competent and justifiable for a manufacturer of paperhangings to regard his production as a decoration complete in itself, neither needing nor fearing any addition in the way of picture, mirror, hanging, or furniture to set it off or contrast with it. On that supposition he may dispense with any consideration of whether it would make a satisfactory background for prints or drawings, whether it would "go" with furniture in dark or in light coloured woods, whether it would harmonize with chintz or with silk curtains ; and, in fact, he may hold himself free from the necessity for any other study than that of the decoration itself. In freeing himself from the shackles, however, he takes upon himself one burden which requires strong shoulders to support—viz., he must make his decoration beautiful in itself. There is nothing so beautiful as *nudity*, when every form is graceful ; but, as we all know, she must be all but a goddess who can dispense with a toilet

*in toto.* Treating, therefore, a paperhanging under the aspect of a decoration only, the manufacturer must either design it for a set of special conditions—say, for a certain apartment; or he must so design it as to prepare for such modifications in it as may be entailed by the various conditions and features of rooms he never has seen, and which he very probably never may see. Under the first contingency he will probably fail to give satisfaction, because more effect could most likely be got at less cost by free-hand painting; and under the second the difficulties are obviously very great, since a decoration may look very well under one set of conditions which may look very ill under another. The only safe refuge for the manufacturer of paperhangings lies, I think, in analysing the usual component parts of a good decoration, and so designing those parts for the decoration he is about to make as to allow of their being readily brought together in various forms of recombination, without risk of their misfitting or looking incongruous. The bibliophile will at once apprehend the value of the system now recommended when he recalls the great variety of elegant designs which were produced by the collocation and variation of wood blocks in the hands of the early German, Dutch, Italian, and French printers. Many a noble volume is filled from end to end with what appear to be a succession of fresh designs in rich borders and fittings; and yet, on analysis, the whole will turn out to be composed by the permutation of a dozen or so of small wood blocks. Often the same component parts of patterns will recur in the duodecimo which have already done duty in the folio; and by judgment and ingenuity they will be made to look well in both. Should such illustrations not recur to the reader's recollection, he will certainly remember how often he may have admired the dexterity with which the bookbinder, with a few well-arranged simple tools, contrives to vary the decorations of the volume he may have been employed to ornament.

Infinitely various as mural decoration may be made, the eye is generally satisfied with the combination upon any one wall of a set of parts fulfilling the following functions:—1st, that of a cornice; 2nd, that of a frieze; 3rd that of a pilaster, or marked vertical division; 4th, that of a stringcourse, or marked horizontal division; 5th, that of a framework to a panel; 6th, that of a diaper, or panel-filling; 7th, that of a corner-piece changing the rectangular form of a panel; 8th, that of a central ornament to enliven a panel space; 9th, that of a dado forming a quiet base against which furniture will detach itself agreeably; and, 10th, a still quieter plinth, or skirting, reconciling the carpet with the wall enrichment. If

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

Great neces-  
sity for  
"flexibility"  
of pattern.

Good models  
furnished by  
early prin-  
ters.

Analysis of  
components  
of ordinary  
paperhang-  
ing decora-  
tion.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

How such  
components  
should be  
combined  
with free-  
hand paint-  
ing.

such a series of parts, or rather, two or more such series of parts in duplicate or triplicate, are arranged upon some "common measure" of geometrical division and scale, they may be counterchanged in an almost infinite permutation, and great variety of effect obtained at small cost. By employing a greater or smaller series of multiples of the parts in "common measure," the setting out may be altered, and panels formed, subdivided, enlarged, or diminished, almost at will. This is the best way of providing for inevitable alterations and making decoration flexible; but it cannot, of course, lead to exactly the same result, or one as perfectly successful, as might be obtained by specially designing a decoration for a given place and under definite conditions of scale, purpose, lighting, &c. Architects often wonder why a combination should not be made of the two processes of block-printing and free-hand painting to a much greater extent than has been hitherto generally adopted. As yet it has been seldom attempted, except in the cheap furnishing up of minor theatres and concert-rooms, and then upon a wrong principle—viz., that of using the paperhanging to replace free-hand artistic painting for "leading motives," as in groups of flowers, arabesques, &c., leaving the monotonous geometrical or architectural parts to be roughly stencilled or carelessly hand-painted on "pouncing." The result of this treatment is that where the eye chiefly rests the mechanical mode of execution is at once apparent through the formal repetitions of features which any decorative painter would instinctively vary as he went on. The exact contrary to this practice is the one which should be adopted—viz., the *ad libitum* motives should be freely hand-painted on grounded or even block-printed diapered paper, and with body colours from a limited series of "pots;" while all the regular repeats of conventional works, forming borders and frames, stringcourses, cornices, &c. might be block or cylinder printed. The whole would then unite; the mechanism would be unobtrusive; and, at moderate cost, a really original and effective decoration might be produced.

Owen Jones  
—his ser-  
vices to this  
branch of  
industry,  
by his de-  
signs

Mr. Owen Jones, who has assisted the English paper-hanging manufacturers more than any other living artist, has brought the experience gained by his almost lifelong labours for Messrs. De la Rue to bear upon the branch of trade now under consideration. Many years ago he designed for that firm an entirely new set of bookbinders' tools, so arranged as to form patterns of endless elaboration by simple *juxta-position* in regular geometrical series. A year or two ago he worked out for Messrs. Jackson and Graham a series of blocks for paperhangings, conceived upon the same system. These

were first used, with admirable effect, for a palace decorated and furnished by that firm for his Highness the Pacha of Egypt; and since then they have been multiplied over the face of the country—helping materially to educate the national eye by accustoming it to conventional forms of simple grace and to scales of colour of delicate adjustment.

Mr. Owen Jones is a well known advocate for “the flat treatment” of paperhangings, and has not as yet publicly recognized in his practice the propriety of the admixture of the pictorial with the flat treatment. Before indicating the direction in which I think the views of one who has both taught and practised so successfully in this department of industry may be advantageously extended and relaxed, it will be but fair to reproduce the enunciation of those views given by their originator on the occasion of his well known lectures on “The True and False in Art,” delivered at Marlborough House shortly after the close of the great Exhibition of 1851—a moment when the attention of artists and manufacturers was lively kindled, and from which a new era may be said to have been instituted for the progress of industrial art, not in this country only, but over the whole face of Europe. The year 1851 will long remain the “stadium” from which industrial mileage will have to be reckoned. Speaking then of the “true and false” in relation to paperhangings, Mr. Owen Jones observes that:—“It is very evident that one of the first principles to be attended to in adorning the walls of an apartment is that nothing should disturb their flatness; yet it is very difficult to find a paper which does not in some way violate this rule. Either we have large masses of conventional foliage, in high apparent relief, surrounding masses of unbroken colour, or representations of flowers, fruits, and ribbons twisted into the most unwarrantable of positions; nothing is more common than to find strawberries and cherries, or other equally impossible combinations, growing on the same stalk; and although great pains are taken to make the fruit and flowers as much like nature as the paperstainer’s art can make them, his imitative skill only increases its inconsistency.

“Strawberries do not grow on walls, but on the ground, and although roses may be trained over walls, they are not endless representations of the same bunches; nor are they interlaced with satin ribbons. I will at once concede that neither the manufacturers who make them, nor the public who purchase them, regard these productions seriously. Viewed in this light, the designs are too absurd to be endurable for an instant; they are only regarded as a means of distributing

and by his  
writings.

His view of  
“the true  
and the  
false” in  
paperhang-  
ings.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

so much colour over the surface harmoniously and agreeably. This is the very best apology that I can make for them.

“ What we contend for is that the same result may be obtained by a more conventional treatment, that we may reach the same end by less vicious means.

“ That colour may be so distributed, without incongruous design, we have the Indian fabrics to prove in one direction, and the Gothic papers of Mr. Pugin in another.

“ It is not by any means necessary (nay, it would be most unendurable) to adopt the peculiar expression of either of these styles, but the same principles which are common to both would equally lead to the formation of a fresh style of convention, more adapted to our own modes of feeling, if our artists and manufacturers would only lend themselves to the attempt, and if the public would only insist upon requiring it. We say, therefore, that all direct representations of natural objects in paperhangings should be avoided, first, because it places these objects in unseemly positions; secondly, because it is customary in almost every apartment to suspend on the walls pictures, engravings, or other ornamental works; and that, therefore, the paper should serve as a background, and nothing on it should be obtrusive or advancing to the eyes.

Diaper patterns and flat treatment recommended as “safest.”

“ Diaper patterns in self tints are safest for this purpose; but, when varieties of colours are used, the Oriental rule of so interweaving the form and colour as that they may present a neutralised bloom, when viewed at a distance, should never be departed from. The prevailing colours of the walls of rooms hung with printed paper should, of course, vary with the character of the room and aspect. Halls and staircases look well hung with green, because the eye on entering a house is generally fatigued by the strong glare of daylight, and green is the most refreshing colour. Studies and dining rooms look well with dull reds in diapers or flocks, which may be enriched with gold. These form good backgrounds for engravings or pictures; but the reds or greens must never be positive colours, but low-toned and broken, so as not disagreeably to impinge upon the eye. In drawing-rooms, where the paper has more to do towards furnishing and beautifying a room, they may be more gay: almost any tone and shade of colour, heightened with gold, may be used, provided always that the colours are so arranged and the forms so interwoven that a perfect balance be obtained and the eye never attracted to any one portion. Floral-patterned papers have, by universal consent and fashion, been adopted for bed-rooms; and I fear we should gain but little in our attempt to change it; we may contend, at least, that they

should be floral patterns on a very different principle to those now in use; and, for ourselves, we may say that a floral-patterned paper of whatsoever kind is the very last we should think of choosing. Everyone who has been ill of fever, or restless, night or morning, well knows how the vacant mind is constantly exercising its fancy on the pattern of a paper, trying to make all sorts of impossible combinations with it. It is the same impulse which we sometimes feel to jump over a precipice, only in the one case we do not indulge the impulse for fear of consequences, and in the other we do, and thereby materially increase our fever or headache. We, therefore, should choose for ourselves a paper of very low-toned secondaries or tertiaries, and on it we should suspend a very fine engraving from the old masters, or other work of art, as perfect as our means would allow. This would enliven the room, and furnish better contemplation for the mind when feverish or restless than the vain endeavour to make something out of nothing."

The decoration Mr. Owen Jones has designed for the present Exhibition, for the enterprising house of Jeffries, has been well rendered by that firm; and exhibits many of Mr. Jones's dogmas carried into successful practice. What are especially noticeable in this decoration are the general blooming cheerfulness of the colouring, which is cast in a bright though tender key; the perfect flow and growth of the stems and leafage; and the well balanced scale and massing of all the conventional forms of which the ornament is built up. As now exhibited—*i.e.*, at an undue height above the level of the eye, and with a top light—the exact reverse of the allowance should be made, which is necessary to a just appreciation of the effect of the gilding in the case of the decoration exhibited by Messrs. H. Woollams and Co., as I shall have occasion to explain further on. In Jeffries's case the gold, which is good and brilliant, is quite flat, and the light, falling upon it from above in a solid mass, is reflected, almost in a sheet, from the surface of the gold to the eye of the spectator; the consequence is that it apparently predominates over the colours to the extent of causing them in certain places to all but disappear. This was never, of course, the effect anticipated by either Mr. Owen Jones or the manufacturer, and under no circumstances in actual use is there the slightest probability that such a dazzling amount of reflection would reach the eye from the brilliant surface of the gilding.

In the case of Messrs. H. Woollams and Co.'s decoration the gilding is treated on quite a different system, the gold being laid upon a granulated surface. This mode of gilding

Mr. Jones's  
work in the  
present Ex-  
hibition for  
Messrs.  
Jeffries.

Messrs. H.  
Woollams'  
decoration.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

is peculiarly luminous in cases where the main lighting of the upper part of the room in which a decoration is hung (the gilding of which is carried out on such a surface) is derived from light reflected from the floor of the room. The reason of this luminous aspect is that the light reflected from the floor catches every little projection from the granulated surface, and the lighted part of the granulation is directly exposed to the eye of the spectator looking upwards. The shaded part is, of course, away from and invisible to him. Now, in the case of a top light shining on a similarly granulated and gilt surface, each projecting granulation has a lower side in shade; and when the surface of the gilding, so lit, is above the level of the spectator's eye, it is the shaded, and not the illuminated, side which he sees; or, at any rate, he sees more of the shaded than of the illuminated side, according to the angle of vision. The consequence is that, what on a level with the eye looks a fine luminous mass of gold, when raised above it, shows as little more than a dead colour; and, of course, the original scale of balance between colour and gilding, upon which the designer and manufacturer reckon, is vitiated, and the effect aimed at is not obtained.

There is another mode in which the height above the eye at which this particular decoration is placed operates to its serious detriment—viz., owing to the obtuse angle of the visual ray, the spectator looking upwards sees all the forms projected on the vertical plane of the decoration greatly foreshortened; while equal spaces upon any horizontal line scarcely differ to the eye whether they occur at the top or at the bottom of the decoration. It follows that the arabesque upon the pilaster appears unduly huddled together and crowded when contrasted with the ornaments upon the stringcourse and frieze. So detrimental, in fact, are the conditions of display regarded by the manufacturer, that he has assured me that nothing will tempt him to exhibit specially-made decorations again, unless he can feel assured that they will be seen in any exhibition, as nearly as may be, as they would be seen in actual use. Of course, all the paperhangings which are raised considerably above the level of the eye suffer; but those obviously most from which the spectator can recede but little, and in which the predominant forms assimilate to well-known examples, cast in a scale of proportion differing from that into which those more or less formed upon them, are forced by optical distortion. In addition to his decoration, Mr. Henry Woollams showed a few good specimens of "estampé" gilding on flock and raised flocks to the public; and to the jury he submitted portfolios of examples of his current productions, with which they signified their entire satisfaction.

Serious  
disadvan-  
tages of the  
mode of  
displaying  
paperhang-  
ings adopted  
at the Exhi-  
bition.

Messrs. H.  
Woollams,  
other goods.

Among these were conspicuous a class of patterns which find much greater favour at home than abroad. I allude to what are known as "mediaeval wall papers." In this department Messrs. H. Woollams and Co. have attained great eminence; and the series they have executed, after designs by Mr. G. T. Robinson, architect, of Leamington, are alike creditable to the manufacturer and the designer. In the first place, these papers are original; in the second, they are based on thoroughly sound principles; and, in the third, they attempt nothing more than they thoroughly well perform. They are no imperfect imitations of things which ought not to be imitated, or, at any rate, not imitated at all, unless they can be perfectly well imitated.

Messrs. Scott and Cuthbertson maintain most creditably the high place they have earned in the trade, especially for their "flock-upon-flock" papers. Their principal decorations consist of raised flock papers, with borders and diapers, both well laid out and balanced. So far the paperhanger; but from that stage begins the work of the decorative painter, who has "grounded," "picked in," and "cut out" his work in the usual style; but in this case with good taste and a general "blooming," and rather delicate effect. Messrs. Scott and Cuthbertson, with a straightforwardness which does them credit, attribute the artistic merit of these decorations, in the case of that reproducing an English style of the 15th century (inclining to the Holbeinesque rather than the Gothic type of the latter part of that century), to Mr. W. Pittman, of London; and, in the case of that in the "Italian style," to Mr. J. Rogers, of Sheffield. As I have already observed, both these are satisfactory, but it appeared to me that they would form better ceiling than wall decorations; and I certainly see no reason why similar raised flock papers should not be largely used to replace elaborate plaster ceilings, or if not to replace them, at any rate to combine with them.

If Messrs. Scott and Cuthbertson had only exhibited these two decorations, they would have failed to duly vindicate their powers as manufacturers of paperhangings, since for successful effect these decorations have obviously mainly depended upon the decorative painters they have associated with them; fortunately, however, they exhibited a small specimen of uncoloured "flock-upon-flock" printing which received the unqualified admiration of every manufacturer who looked at it. In its way, there was nothing in the Exhibition to approach it. The thickness of the flocking, the flatness of the ground, and the perfectly clean squareness of the raised edges showed the greatest possible dexterity on the part of the printer.

Messrs.  
Scott &  
Cuthbertson  
—their de-  
corations;

their excel-  
lent "flock-  
upon-flock"  
printing.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

Messrs.  
Owen & Co.'s  
painted  
raised flock-  
ing cheaply  
imitated by  
machinery  
by Messrs.  
H. Wooll-  
lams.

Messrs.  
John Woo-  
lams.

Messrs. R.  
Horne &  
Co.

Hitherto it has been customary for raised flock paper-makers to rely mainly for the decoration of their papers upon the co-operation of the decorative painter. What the decorative painter may do in this direction is, perhaps, best shown by the clever mediæval decoration exhibited by Messrs. Owen and Co., of London, as a background for furniture. If people are content with monochrome, it is best, and probably cheapest, to hang the papers uncoloured, and to paint and "flat" them in the ordinary way when hung; but if it should be desired to "pick out" the grounds or to paint the raised patterns in different colours, a good deal of expensive hand-work is involved. To save this Messrs. H. Woollams and Co., and possibly other manufacturers, whose specimens, from having been shut up in books, I may not have seen, have decorated their raised flocks by machinery in the factory, and now sell a complete decoration of this kind—which requires nothing but hanging—at a moderate rate.

The firm of Messrs. John Woollams and Co., under the able management of Mr. Hubert, retains its old position of excellence as manufacturers both of good block and machine printed papers. Their decoration, designed by Mr. Collman, is correct in its forms and tasteful, but wants vigour and novelty. Their current papers are very good. The exact reverse of this criticism on Messrs. John Woollams' decoration applies to the decoration in the Pompeian style, exhibited by Messrs. Robert Horne and Co. In that there are, perhaps, too much vigour and novelty—there is certainly an absence of taste. The colours are crude and overloaded; they are insufficiently "broken up" with ornamental forms; and it is to be feared that a native of Pompeii, could he rise, literally, from his ashes, would not feel flattered by such a resuscitation in the 19th century of the style of his native city. Still, as a specimen of sound printing in paperhanging, the decoration was good in a manufacturing point of view, and showed that all that was wanting for success was a better pattern; or even the same pattern printed in gentler colouring. This decoration served as a good illustration of the danger of a departure from the safe rule in chromatics—that the eye is pained by large masses of strong, crude colour, and may yet be pleased by exactly the same tints in small compartments or in subdivided forms. The terms "large" and "small" in any such dogmas must, of course, be measured by proportion to the whole area which can be embraced by the eye at one glance from the usual point of view, or within the ordinary limits of distance at which a spectator can plant himself from the surface decorated.

Mr. Land's papers are of no great pretension, and are scarcely so successful in their way as Mr. Marsden's imitations of marbles, some of which attracted a good deal of notice from foreigners.

Upon the whole, the English block-printed goods hold a fair average position ; and, if less pictorially successful than the French, show in many particulars a juster appreciation of ornamental design in the flat treatment, specially befitting wall-decoration by mechanical means.

In the case of cheap goods produced and multiplied in enormous quantities by machinery, as in those exhibited by C. and J. Potter, of Over Darwen, Lancashire ; William Cooke, of Leeds ; W. Snape and Co., Heywood Higginbottom, Smith & Co., of Manchester, and others, the very fact of the vastly extensive sale for which they are intended makes the necessity of obtaining first-class patterns one of primary importance, under the double aspect of the education of the eye of the people and of permanent commercial success.

The most enlightened manufacturers (and, happily, now the number of such is rapidly increasing) are fully alive to the money results produced by the employment of the best talent and the largest experience in the design of common goods. It is therefore to me a matter of regret to observe in one case only, amongst these manufacturers of cheap but very good paperhangings, the execution of really fresh and tasteful designs. The house of William Cooke and Co., of Leeds, exhibits a series of 24 original designs, founded on different flowers and plants, amongst which many are very good and few altogether unpleasing. The treatment of the hop, the hawthorn, and the anemone are particularly agreeable to the eye both in form and colour. The Chinese primrose also makes a very pretty delicate diaper.

When we turn from the display of this firm to that of other manufacturers, we find that the designs of the latter (many of them, particularly those of Mr. Potter, beautifully executed) are of three kinds—the best being reproductions of common French designs of second-rate quality ; the second best, imitations of old stock block-printed papers ; and the third (which are happily exceptional only) are of that disagreeable class of shaded semi-Gothic panelling and endless repetition of bad little landscapes which were so pungently ridiculed by Pugin and condemned by a most just verdict to the celebrated "chamber of horrors" in Marlborough House. It is strange that amongst the least successful of these papers the colour green, which is usually most tranquillising to the eye (as being the complementary to red, which is irritating) should be the very one least successfully

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

Mr. Mars-  
den.  
Fair position  
of English  
block-  
printed  
goods as  
contrasted  
with French.

English  
machine-  
printed  
goods.

W. Cooke  
& Co.'s.  
good de-  
signs.

Messrs.  
Potter of  
Over Dar-  
wen.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

His merit  
for perse-  
rance and  
ingenuity.

used. The error made usually consists in attempting to harmonize the vivid arsenic green by "powdering" it, as the heralds would say, with dark red diapering. This only serves by its contrast of colour to make the green more green, and by contrast of intensity to make it more vivid.

While thus criticising these cheap papers under their art-aspect it would be throwing away a just occasion for national congratulation to fail to take credit for the strides we have made in bringing their production to a very high pitch of commercial excellence. In spite of our high rates of labour I am assured that we manufacture these papers cheaper and in far larger quantities than does any other country, and that the problem of multiplying colours, even up to thirty in one machine, in which the "registry" of tints is perfectly maintained (as has been done by Mr. Potter) is one as yet quite unrivalled out of England. This perfection of "registry" has been obtained, to a great extent, by abandoning the use of heated rollers to force the drying of the printed tints, which was found to so distort the paper as to cause it to drag "out of register," and by adopting the system instead of carrying off the continuous paper to great distances on "friction rollers," so as to give it sufficient time to dry in a natural way between each imprint. The chief difficulty which still remains to be overcome in the production of these machine-printed papers is to get a sufficient "impasto," or "body," printed on the surface of the paper. At present, even the best look a little unsolid and "tinty." This unpleasant impression would virtually cease if the manufacturers of this class of papers would only make a style of patterns for themselves suitable to their means of execution, and not continually invite invidious comparisons by their imitation of the best class of block-printed goods.

One is the more anxious that machine-printed goods should be made artistically agreeable, since there is reason to fear that before long their relative cheapness will drive the block-printed hand-worked papers to a great extent out of the market. The machine-printed papers are already beginning to monopolise the export trade.

Having thus hastily surveyed the English paperhangings, it may be well to take stock of those of the French, noticing, by way of preface, the general characteristics of French progress during the last 12 years, as summed up by M. Aimé Girard in the official catalogue—viz., 1st, the development of the processes of mechanical printing and constant improvements in connection therewith. Limited at first to the use of three or four colours, this mode of production is now employed successfully in the execution of papers and borders

Prospects of  
this branch  
of the  
trade.

French  
paperhang-  
ings.  
Progress  
made dur-  
ing the last  
twelve  
years.

involving the employment of from fifteen to twenty colours. 2nd. The recent introduction and immediate general adoption of a mechanical method of laying on the ground tints for paperhangings. 3rd. The invention of several new "styles," such as struck and gilt flocks, imitations of leather and of silk damasks. 4th. The application to paperhangings of certain new colours, such as the series derived from aniline, the substitution of "guignet" green for arsenic, &c.

The great house of Zuber is not as successful as usual in *its pièce de résistance*, but in its ordinary trade papers there are both successful novelties and a very even level of excellence. The imitations of cretonne chintz hangings are now so close to the originals as quite to deceive the eye at a little distance, and their engraved gold ornaments, the fixing and burnishing of which are produced by heat and pressure, after the fashion of bookbinding, on "moire antique," dead, and stamped morocco or "maroquin" grounds, are of the cleanest and most perfect description. The house of Balin, formerly Genoux, in some of their reproductions of stamped leather by paper worked in relief, have obtained a novel and very rich effect, by floating over a white metal pattern with different coloured transparent lacquers, producing the effect of different coloured metals. Their stamped goldwork is no less good than that of Zuber. Torquetil Malzard, Isidore Leroy, and Gillon Fils, and Thorailleur, all lend themselves to that scale of "tons neutres," or low-toned tertiaries, now so popular and monotonous in France, the first named being the only one of the three to break through the tiresome cold feebleness of the rest with a very cleverly-executed imitation of a padded yellow silk moire antique hanging. This sombre style finds, unfortunately, imitators everywhere (except in England, happily); and in Holland the exhibit of J. H. Rutten, of Maestricht, is influenced by its foggy dulness.

Some of the best paperhangings manufactured out of England and France are shown in the Swedish department, by C. A. Kaberg, of Stockholm. It is not a large, but it is a very good display, one of the specimens being an entire novelty, in the shape of an imitation in relief of padded silk wall-hangings. In this the raising of the padding and the folds of the silk, as it is gathered in and bound by small coloured glass studs, are produced in relief by pressure, as in the imitations in paper of stamped leather, and the colour is applied to this surface. At a very little distance the illusion is complete. However unsatisfactory such illusions may be in point of principle, they still (when successful and novel, as this is) indicate power on the part of the manufacturer which

The houses  
of Zuber,  
Balin,  
and others.

Swedish  
paperhang-  
ings.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

Use and  
abuse of  
"novelty at  
any price."

only needs judicious direction and control to be made profitable to himself and honourable to his country.

The use of such "tricks upon travellers" as paper, printed, or painted hangings with armorial bearings, imitating silken banners, which decorate the department in which Mr. Kaberg exhibits, is justifiable only when successful, and in such a case at least a happy end alone can sanction the means. What may be easily excused in the theatre becomes unpardonable in the palace, and what "my Lady" may delight in as mural millinery to set off her fair person in her own "snuggery" would be out of place and "ridiculous" in "my Lord's" saloon.

In decoration, where the fancy is as "free" as it is in the choice of a paperhanging, it is well to remember that "many men have many minds," and the *arbiter elegantiarum* who may have to dictate as to what may or may not fall within the canons of propriety will do well to make his canons sufficiently elastic to take in a wide diversity of taste and practice. Thus, it should be remembered that much is lawful on a small scale which would be unpardonable on a large one. From Esop's lapdog and donkey to the present time prettinesses in little have been tolerated, which have become overwhelmingly vulgar when magnified.

"Motives" of ornamen-  
tation which may be pardonable on a small scale, inadmis-  
sible on a large one.

Who would be stern enough to declare what ornamentation may not be put upon a fan? It is far easier to define what would be intolerable in a Church. As old Blondel, with the tact and grace of the "ancien régime," declares, "C'est dans la décoration des petits appartements destinés "au développement de l'esprit que l'on peut seulement "s'abandonner à la vivacité de son génie à l'égard des "ornemens." So it is that upon the walls of a boudoir, as we have already hinted, much may be permitted which would be repugnant to good taste in a larger and more public room. For such occasionally may be used with good effect the clever imitations of lace over damask which were such popular novelties a few years ago, and of which some very clever specimens are still shown by the best French houses. As novelty is obviously one of the greatest charms of such *colifichets*, and as novelty in this case has "lost its gloss," no excellence of manufacture will bring these goods again into vogue until another generation may arise to whom they may still be *nouveautés*. Their place has to some extent been taken, upon the present occasion, by such imitations as that we have noticed, by Mr. Kaberg, and others of cretonne chintzes. These have been very satisfactorily executed by French exhibitors, and it would be difficult at a very little distance to tell the original from the imitation. Of course

the idea of imitation is not an agreeable one, savouring of the "sham" system, but, forgetting for a moment that any such things as cretonne chintzes exist, there is no reason, I consider, why the majority of these papers, when hung, should produce any other than an agreeable effect.

The cretonne chintz patterns are generally of three classes, ornaments relieved with light and shade *en camaïeu* in a bold "blotch" style on a ground of colour; small figures and ornaments generally engraved similarly relieved, but in a very minute and hard style; and bold, conventional flower decorations, imitated, to a certain extent, from old Persian and Oriental faience. The first of these styles may be tolerated in paperhangings, although it cannot be denied that any strong announcement of *jour à gauche* or *jour à droite* is extremely difficult to deal with in a room, the walls of which may be lit from both right and left, or in which the lighting by night may exactly reverse the lighting by day. The second is not agreeable, but the third offers little or no difficulty, the shading, if introduced at all, being merely conventional and blending into modification of local colours, and furnishes a new and really very elegant style of paperhanging. The chief drawback to this is, that the vivacity of the patterns is generally too great to allow of the satisfactory exhibition of pictures when suspended upon them, unless the pictures are upon a large scale, and the vivid ornamentation either upon a comparatively very small one, or when that "vivid ornamentation" is relieved upon a full-toned ground, assimilating in vigour to the general tone of the ornamentation.

It is singular that in these days, when such extraordinary enthusiasm is shown, both for the study of ceramic art and for the collection of beautiful specimens of it, the paper-hangers should have only manifested a very limited inclination to imitate styles of ornament which this study and this rage for collection have made popular. Many of the Oriental vases, the Persian dishes, the Moorish azulejos, the majolica "tondi," the old Nankin beakers, and the various "faiences" of different ages and countries, offer fresh and lively "motifs" for borders and diapers, and even for complete wall decorations, in which the conventionalities are most happily treated. They are, however, as yet to the paperhanger almost virgin mines. So, too, much to my astonishment, is the art of illumination. It is only necessary for the student to go into the galleries of the "history of labour" and look over a few of the contributions in the shape of splendid manuscripts with miniatures, exhibited by M. Firmin Didot, the Duc d'Aumale, M. Dutoit, and

Clever imita-  
tions of  
Cretonne  
chintz pat-  
terns.

Suggestions  
as to value  
of decorative  
models de-  
rivable from  
Ceramic art,

and illumi-  
nated MSS

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

French floral  
paperhang-  
ings.

Imperative  
necessity of  
the design-  
ner's special  
proficiency  
in "gou-  
ache" or  
body colour  
painting.

Such profi-  
ciency rare  
in England  
but common  
in France.

other distinguished collectors, to put himself into a position to recognize the admirable sources of inspiration which they supply for painted decorations of any kind or style.

The description of paper in which the French have long enjoyed a supremacy over all other nations has been one in which flowers, sketchily and delicately tinted in a highly conventional manner, and yet one so contrived as to appear free and without artifice or restriction, have played the principal part. When the process of block-printing, by means of which all the best class of paperhangings are produced, is considered, it will be of course obvious that each colour must be printed separately, as in chromolithography; but with this essential difference, that, owing to the vehicle (size and whiting) which must be used by the former process, each colour or tint must stand or fall by its own separate quality on a paperhanging. By the latter process, on the contrary, with its oil and varnish vehicle, transparent colour can be brought upon transparent colour, and all the effects of "glazing" in a picture can be obtained. This necessity for each colour to "tell its own tale," without blending with underlying tints, obviously limits the range of palette, by which effects must be produced, and considerable skill and experience are required to pre-determine what shall be the precise tints used, so that a limited number shall produce a fair approximation to natural pictorial representation. With such restrictions, to aim at the same powerful rendering of imitative art which would be easy with even the same number of mixed transparent and opaque pigments, susceptible of gradation by dilution, would be obviously ridiculous. The designer is therefore bound to adopt a modified mode of blotch painting in a lowered key—*i.e.*, one in which all the tones are made to agree amongst themselves, although the whole pictorial result does not agree with the luminous vivacity and variety which may characterise the group of objects the designer may select for representation. To form, or work in, these artificial or conventional scales of colour successfully demands careful training and long practice, and is not to be done by the most accomplished artists without experience and special education. With us this training and experience are as yet but little gone through and acquired, while in France there exists a traditional school of what are called "dessinateurs," who find constant employment in making patterns in all sorts of keys and scales of colour for fac-simile reproduction by manufacturers. In England as yet we have no corresponding class, and, although in the schools of design the advanced pupils generally pick up some little dexterity in this direction, their practical training

is not to be compared with that which every apprentice in the atelier of a professional "dessinateur" acquires in Paris or Lyons. The result of the two systems is manifested the moment we attempt to trace out the authors of the chief decorations in England and in France. In the former country, the manufacturers of paperhangings in want of anything beyond the simplest current goods have had to address themselves to architects, or to persons who have received an architectural education—as, for instance, Messrs. Jeffries to Mr. Owen Jones (who is well known to have some years ago revolutionised Messrs. Townsend and Parker's business); Messrs. H. Woollams to Mr. Robinson, of Leamington, for mediæval papers, and to myself for their Renaissance decoration in the present Exhibition; Messrs. J. Woollams to Mr. Collman; and I think, Messrs. Cook, of Leeds, to Dr. Dresser. On the other hand, the manufacturers of the latter country (France) have procured all their special designs from painters or "dessinateurs," whose chief, if not sole, business it is to make patterns for this branch of trade—such as MM. Dumont, by whom the great decoration of the *Maison Balin* (successors to the well-known firm of Genoux of Paris) has been designed; Wagner (long the chief designer for the house of *Defossé*), who has so successfully directed the productions of the great factory of M. Zuber, at Rixheim; and Aidan, whose design for a Pompeian paperhanging decoration in the gallery of industrial drawings is in the highest degree meritorious.

In turning to the productions of other countries than those to which I have already alluded, we find that Vetter and Co., of Warsaw, show some papers of poor execution, so far as imitation of common French papers goes, but some of the patterns, which are more or less founded on Moorish examples, have a good effect of barbaric colour. The company of Camuret, of St. Petersburg, has some fairly-executed imitations of common French papers. Two patterns, with aniline dyed flocks, are effective, and have a certain novelty of aspect.

In Austria the great house of Spoerlin and Zimmermann, of Vienna, make only a small exhibition, but at the same time one quite large enough to vindicate their position as extensive and good manufacturers. Their diaper, mainly on a turquoise-blue ground, is very pretty, and in point of liveliness of manufacture nothing need be better than their flower-paper on a neutral ground. It is, I think, to be regretted that this pattern was not printed on a white or light yellow ground, in which case it would have presented the aspect of an admirable hand-painted Chinese paper. While

Russian  
paperhang-  
ings.

MR. DIGBY  
WYATT  
ON PAPER-  
HANGINGS.

Fancy  
papers and  
decorative  
stationery.

commenting on the gay and cheerful fancy shown by Messrs. Spoerlin and Zimmermann (who appear as the only German makers of paperhangings of any importance) in these specimens, it is but right to dwell upon the wretched taste with which their hangings have been mounted; one in Gothic oak panelling, imitated in paperhanging of the crudest and most cutting chiaroscuro, and the other in a framework, one-third Chinese, one-third Moresque, and the remaining third in some indescribable style, agreeing with neither of the other two. The small marbled and ornamented "papeterie" of the house is too well known to need comment, as, indeed, is that of the house of Knepper, also of Vienna. These two manufacturers were also keen rivals in 1862 at London. In such fancy papers, *i.e.*, papers with artistic designs, the Germans show much better than in the article of paperhangings, especially through several Bavarian houses, and notably those of Haenle, of Munich, and Stern, of Furth. Such fancy papers, which are also admirably made at Paris, are much used for wrapping up sweetmeats, and in the "jour de l'an" offerings so universal on the Continent, the value of the case or wrapper often exceeds that of the object so elegantly enshrined. In England the fancy paper trade is greatly sustained by the annual "Valentine" fever, which, though of short duration, consumes a very large quantity of the most elaborate stationery made in any country in Europe. The prevailing fashion, I might almost call it rage, too, for monograms, embossed, "illuminated," and especially "eccentric," both for use and for collection, has also tended to the production of greatly improved artistic designs for ornamenting letter paper. Unfortunately, few of these were shown. The British section had also to mourn the absence of Messrs. De la Rue, who on other occasions have maintained, I believe, an undisputed ascendancy for England in every branch of this elegant form of the application of art to industry.

Painted  
blinds.

Gradual de-  
cline of the  
trade.

The painted blind trade has apparently suffered from the great increase in the supply and concurrent reduction in price of stained glass; for many of those staircase or passage windows which used to be covered with ornamental blinds, which, however pretty while new, always looked shabby and discoloured after a year or two's wear, good and permanent screens in glass are now put up, requiring no subsequent attention or removal, and often presenting very agreeable decorative effects. On looking over the specimens of "stores" or painted blinds in the Exhibition, one cannot fail to notice, firstly, that there are not so many as usual heretofore; and, secondly, that those which there are are not so

good. The truth is that painted blinds have gone out of fashion, and as there is little or nothing special in the process of their manufacture success or failure entirely depends upon the talent of the decorative painter who ornaments them. If it pays to employ a first-class hand, the screen is good, and if the decoration is left to a second-rate one, it is poor, and simply repeats, in another form, the current exaggerations and commonplaces of vulgar decoration. Apparently the French have not thought it worth while for this Exhibition to employ any of their most dexterous talent, and thus it is that the German specimens, except in flower painting, are rather better than the French. The real and proper use for such blinds is to give a hasty decoration only to a building erected for some temporary use, as in fact they have been made to do in the British section, in the large windows of the machinery department, where they tell a good series of stories in a very clever way. There is little to be regretted in the decline of a branch of industry supplanted by one of greater excellence and permanency. We may therefore, to a certain extent, bury the painted blind business without many tears or much lamentation.

A retrospective glance over what I have now written on the products of Class 19 justifies my confidently asserting that the balance of excellence hangs tolerably evenly between France and England in this department. It may probably incline in favour of the former country in so far as the perfect execution of the most elaborate class of goods may extend, but on account of the signs I recognize of present healthy commercial economy of production, combined with vigour, activity, and good taste at home, as well as abroad, I entertain no fear for the immediate future of British industry in this section.

In conclusion the author looks hopefully and cheerfully on the state of the paperhanging manufacture in England.



EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE DE 1867  
A PARIS

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RAPPORTS DU JURY INTERNATIONAL  
PUBLIÉS SOUS LA DIRECTION  
DE M. MICHEL CHEVALIER

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OUVRAGES  
DE  
TAPISSIER ET DE DÉCORATEUR  
PAR  
MM. JULES DIÉTERLE ET DIGBY WYATT

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PARIS  
IMPRIMERIE ET LIBRAIRIE ADMINISTRATIVES DE PAUL DUPONT  
45, RUE DE GRENELLE-SAINT-HONORÉ, 45

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1867



# OUVRAGES DE TAPISSIER ET DE DÉCORATEUR

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Les industries qui appartiennent aux classes 14 et 15 naissent de besoins identiques, suggèrent les mêmes réflexions et s'enlacent si constamment dans leurs produits qu'il est difficile de les séparer, et la plupart des considérations contenues dans le rapport qui précède s'appliquent également à celui-ci.

Depuis longtemps, en France, la pensée qui protège les arts, les sciences et les lettres, conserve avec sollicitude les restes précieux de nos antiquités nationales, et les débris des arts somptuaires sont recueillis religieusement dans les archives de l'État, les palais historiques, les musées de Paris et de province. En Angleterre, s'est révélé un vif amour pour les arts nationaux et étrangers du moyen âge ; il a donné naissance à des collections déjà célèbres. En Allemagne et dans les autres contrées du Nord, cette curiosité rétrospective s'est développée avec moins de puissance ; mais nous voyons actuellement l'esprit public et les gouvernants s'en préoccuper sérieusement. Dans une voie parallèle, on s'est adonné avec une recherche active à l'étude des procédés industriels

et des arts de construction du moyen âge ; les manuscrits ont été compulsés, les œuvres étudiées, analysées, et de nombreuses publications scientifiques et artistiques en ont été le résultat.

Pour la première fois, l'Exposition de 1867 nous montre dans un seul cadre, réunis aux produits modernes, ces éléments de l'art, de la science et de l'industrie, provenant de sources si nombreuses et si variées d'époque et de nationalité. Ces éléments, joints aux ressources dont il a été question dans les considérations du rapport sur la classe 14, offrent à chaque peuple, dans l'avenir, des forces égales et des avantages réciproques pour assurer leur marche dans la voie du progrès. Il doit en résulter une fusion presque accomplie dans le domaine de la science et de l'industrie, et un éclectisme déjà sensible dans les classes qui représentent les industries d'art.

Nous avons dit dans quelle mesure nous voudrions voir s'établir cette communauté des progrès de la civilisation, combien elle est féconde, salutaire pour la science, l'industrie et le bien-être des peuples ; mais aussi, quel genre de résistance il faut y apporter pour conserver la physionomie des types nationaux et cette originalité qui fait aujourd'hui encore la gloire de peuples disparus sous la couche des siècles, et dont l'existence n'est connue que par les ruines de leurs monuments et les débris de leurs arts. Nous nous bornerons donc à marquer, par l'indication des œuvres les plus saillantes, la situation actuelle des arts décoratifs de chaque nation à l'Exposition de 1867.

## CHAPITRE I.

### OUVRAGES DE TAPISSIER.

Par droit d'ancienneté, nous commencerons par l'Asie, qui fut la mère des civilisations anciennes. Comme les artistes de tous les temps et les souverains de l'antiquité et du moyen âge, nous avons admiré les produits de l'art oriental, si splendides autrefois, et qui restent encore un modèle de goût et d'élegance. Ils offrent toujours une qualité difficilement atteinte par les artistes de nos contrées. C'est, nous le répétons encore, une union parfaite du coloris et de la pureté des formes, une pondération harmonieuse de toutes les parties de l'œuvre. Ce qui est plus rare encore, cette fine fleur de la beauté se révèle également dans les productions les plus ordinaires du travail et des matériaux, comme dans les œuvres les plus somptueuses et les plus accomplies de la main d'œuvre. Cette loi admirable de l'ordre, du rythme, si les Grecs l'ont possédée au suprême degré dans les arts plastiques, les Orientaux en sont les maîtres dans l'emploi de la coloration.

L'espace nous manque pour détailler les collections des Indes, de la Perse, de la Chine et du Japon; mais, dans leur étude, l'artiste, le fabricant, puiseront le secret du goût, de l'harmonie et de la proportion. Comme nous, ils seront ravis des ingénieuses combinaisons du tisserand indien, constellant, avec tant de grâce, de fleurs et de palmettes aux ondoyantes courbures, les magnifiques châles de Bénarès, les vaporeuses mousselines de Dacca et les riches étoffes du Penjaub. Les mêmes séductions se rencontrent dans les produits de la Perse, dans ses superbes tapis et dans ses fines et délicieuses mosaïques. La Chine et le Japon possèdent le même privilége. Quelle hardiesse de lignes dans ces oiseaux se becquetant sur

de vieux trones, composant la bizarre et gracieuse ornementation de ce coffre de Nangasaki; quelle perfection merveilleuse dans leurs boîtes laquées; quelle chaude splendeur de tons dans toutes leurs soieries !

Dans la fabrication orientale, chaque objet a une forme, simple de galbe, exprimant parfaitement l'usage; jamais elle n'est ambitieuse, jamais elle n'emprunte un contour, une ornementation étrangère à son origine, qu'elle résulte du bronze, de la céramique, de l'émail ou du marbre. Nous oublions facilement ces règles du bon sens; nous transformons une œuvre faite pour le bronze en marbre, pour le marbre en bronze, et, par exemple, le Paros transparent de la Vénus de Milo en carton-pierre ou en ciment Coignet. On ne saurait trop critiquer ces funestes habitudes de l'industrie moderne, qui dénaturent déplorablement les plus belles œuvres de l'art.

Revenant à notre appréciation des œuvres industrielles et artistiques de l'Orient, nous dirons encore que la même délicatesse de goût y distingue la peinture décorative. Le coloris en est toujours riche, émaillé, harmonieux sur le vase, dans le panneau, sur la faïence ou la fresque. La fleur s'élève saine et élégante; le peintre rejette les raccourcis, les effets d'ombre et de lumière, il cherche la pureté et l'éclat du ton; en un mot, il décore et ne songe pas à produire le trompe-l'œil du tableau. Sa flore, qui nous paraît conventionnelle, donne une image plus complète de la richesse et de la fraîcheur de la création que nos imitations inintelligentes de peinture. L'Exposition nous montre heureusement des témoignages de l'admiration qu'ils ont fait naître chez les artistes: la France, l'Angleterre en offrent particulièrement de nombreux exemples, parmi lesquels nous citerons les belles publications de M. Owen Jones.

Après avoir rendu hommage à un art si sincère et si expressif, revenons aux nations dont la tendance manifeste est de se fondre de plus en plus ou de ne conserver que des

nuances bien irrésolues, pour exprimer leur nationalité.

Presque tous les fabricants français de meubles, surtout ceux qui ont donné à leur industrie le plus d'éclat, ont compris qu'il y avait un grand avantage pour eux à joindre l'art du tapissier à l'ameublement proprement dit. Nous retrouverons en effet pour la France, parmi les tapissiers, une partie notable des exposants de la haute ébénisterie. La France, dans les produits de ces industries, grâce surtout à MM. Fourdinois, Rondilon, Deville, Mazaros, Ribaillier et Lanneau, occupe le premier rang, pour la supériorité du goût et le nombre des objets exposés. Des causes particulières nous donnent encore dans ce concours de grands avantages. On comprend que les travaux du tapissier, du décorateur s'expliquent et se jugent difficilement en dehors de leur emplacement définitif, et sauf les palais et les habitations orientales, les exposants étrangers n'ont pu donner des ensembles aussi complets que les pavillons de l'Empereur et de l'Impératrice, les salles destinées aux rois de Prusse et de Belgique étant de trop peu d'importance pour donner la mesure de l'art décoratif de ces contrées.

Dans le parc réservé, se trouvait le pavillon entièrement édifié par M. Penon et dédié à Sa Majesté l'Impératrice: les meubles, les sculptures, les peintures ont concouru à rendre une idée gracieuse et très-réussie. M. Penon a bien rempli son programme, en comprenant que, dans un espace aussi restreint, il fallait s'adresser aux goûts délicats d'une auguste personne, plus encore qu'à l'éclat de son rang. M. Duval, aidé de l'industrie de nombreux fabricants, a décoré le pavillon de l'Empereur; la disposition générale de ce pavillon est agréable et ne manque pas d'élégance, mais l'harmonie des colorations et l'exécution de certains détails laissent beaucoup à désirer.

Si nous continuons rapidement l'examen des mêmes produits dans les sections étrangères, nous citerons les lits en fer de M. Kittschel (de Vienne), jolis dans leur simplicité et

garnis d'étoffes bien choisies. En Angleterre, l'usage de ces meubles en métal est très-répandu, et l'Exposition nous en montre de nombreux échantillons. Presque tous sont surchargés de détails inutiles, d'un goût médiocre et contraire à l'usage de ces objets, qui demandent beaucoup de légèreté et une forme sobre. Nous ne comprenons pas le lit en métal enrichi d'ornements coûteux. Son emploi nous semble réservé pour les classes modestes ou les chambres à coucher sans apparat. L'Italie en offre de meilleurs spécimens, dégagés de ce luxe faux. La Suisse avait envoyé la garniture d'un lit en satin bleu clair, brodée en paille, d'un effet agréable et nouveau.

## CHAPITRE II.

### PEINTURE DÉCORATIVE, MARBRERIE, ORNEMENTATIONS DIVERSES.

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#### § 1. — Peinture décorative.

L'exposition du Palais est pauvre d'œuvres de ce genre. Cependant Paris possède d'habiles décorateurs ; mais leurs travaux font partie des palais, des hôtels, qui surgissent aujourd'hui dans notre capitale. L'absence de cet art, que les grands maîtres ont illustré de leur talent, est regrettable. Nous le considérons comme la clé de voûte des arts et des industries décoratives, et il était désirable que l'on pût l'apprécier dans ses rapports avec les industries qui en sont le développement naturel.

Malgré cette absence, nous pouvons affirmer que cette branche de la classe 15 a fait de véritables progrès. Nous sommes loin toutefois des œuvres achevées de la renaissance française et italienne, de l'ampleur des décos de Louis XIV, des ingénieuses et brillantes originalités des peintres de la Régence et de Louis XV, et des œuvres délicates

des décorateurs de Louis XVI. Mais, relativement aux froides productions de la première partie de ce siècle, il s'est fait d'heureux et incontestables efforts ; et de magnifiques restaurations exécutées sous la direction d'habiles architectes ont servi à l'enseignement de nos artistes ; des études sérieuses se sont produites, et l'art décoratif en a reçu une vigoureuse impulsion.

Parmi les étrangers, le professeur Cipolata a, d'une main habile, décoré les arcades de la section italienne d'arabesques empruntées aux loges du Vatican. Les peintures du temple égyptien, exécutées par des artistes français, peuvent être louées comme une imitation fidèle et intéressante des décos- tions du grand art de l'Égypte. Un pavillon, dû à M. Georges Diéterle, jeune architecte français, édifié pour exposer des cachemires de l'Inde, a été remarqué par d'habiles emprunts judicieusement inspirés des habitations indiennes. Le kiosque du vice-roi d'Égypte, le palais tunisien, ont charmé les artistes et les gens du monde ; mais leur mérite consiste moins dans les détails intérieurs que dans les dispositions sveltes et gracieuses de cette architecture orientale, qui exprime si parfaitement le climat et les mœurs de ses habitants. Nous terminerons par la maison dite ottomane, qui relève complètement de l'art persan : c'est l'œuvre la plus parfaite que nous offre cette section. Les admirables règles qui gouvernent l'art oriental y trouvent leur démonstration achevée, et nous félicitons sincèrement l'auteur de ce remarquable travail, M. Parvillé, artiste français.

§ 2. — Marbrerie et pierres dures.

L'exposition la plus importante de cette partie de l'ameublement est certainement celle que nous offre M. Viot, exposant français. Des torchères, des vases, des coupes de dimensions considérables, en marbres variés, et surtout l'heureux emploi des onyx de l'Algérie alliés aux métaux, fournissent

des richesses décoratives habilement développées par le crayon de M. Cornu, et le beau talent du statuaire Carrier Belleuse. M. Beurdeley exposait des produits peu nombreux, mais d'une beauté de matière exceptionnelle. De belles pièces en porphyre, ornées de riches montures en bronze doré, des coupes, des vases en cristal de roche, en jaspe, montés sur or émaillé avec beaucoup d'art par M. Duron, distinguent spécialement cette exposition. MM. Parfonry et Lemaire ont mérité la même distinction, en exposant une excellente cheminée en marbre rouge et blanc, d'une bonne et sérieuse composition architecturale, et d'une sculpture où le ciseau se montre exercé et brillant. Nous citerons encore, avec ces œuvres remarquables, un autel en marbre blanc décoré de mosaïques en verre, par M. Baud et Penel, les carrelages en stuc de M. Crapoix, et les marbres de Bagnères-de-Bigorre comme étant les produits d'une exploitation considérable.

En Belgique, l'exploitation et le travail des marbres constituent une industrie nationale d'une importance commerciale très-grande. Les colorations des marbres belges sont vigoureuses et riches de ton. Les vieux édifices civils et religieux de ce pays montrent le bel emploi que les artistes flamands en ont su tirer. La plupart des produits de l'exposition belge n'ont pas le même avantage; les formes en sont lourdes et d'un goût médiocre; nous devons en excepter quelques cheminées de MM. Melot, Louvencourt et Leclercq.

Dans la section anglaise, MM. Wedgood ont exposé une œuvre de ce genre, en belle matière d'albâtre, décorée de plaques de biscuit de porcelaine; le goût fin et sévère, qui à dirigé ce travail, fait honneur à cette célèbre et ancienne maison. Nous avons encore remarqué, comme une qualité précieuse, quoique secondaire, le brillant poli donné au granit par MM. Macdonald et Field d'Aberdeen. Ce résultat difficile est apprécié en Angleterre, où cette dure matière est très-employée dans les constructions civiles.

La Russie nous présente des pierres dures d'une grande

beauté, telles que la malachite, la rhodonite, les jaspes, dans divers compartiments parfaitement travaillés,

§ 3. — Mosaïques.

L'établissement impérial de Peterhof a exposé une mosaïque d'une grande dimension, qui est le joyau de la section russe. Le modèle de cette œuvre justement remarquée est du professeur Neef; ce peintre distingué a donné aux personnages de sa composition des attitudes et des expressions sincèrement religieuses. Les habiles mosaïstes qui ont exécuté ce modèle, sont MM. Bourakin, Mouraview et Gogofonow. Ces artistes, pour la perfection du travail, sont les seuls rivaux, que l'Exposition nous révèle, des célèbres copistes des manufactures impériales de tapisserie des Gobelins et de Beauvais. A ces louanges données avec unanimité, nous ferons une seule réserve qui s'adresse à l'éminent auteur du modèle: dans les mosaïques, ainsi que dans les peintures sur verre, les maîtres de ces arts évitaient les grandes parties d'ombre et de clair-obscur, comme altérant la beauté du coloris et le caractère séraphique si convenables aux décosrations des églises.

En Italie, M. Salviati, de Venise, intéresse par une collection complète de mosaïques offrant des types très-variés et d'autres objets remarquables que nous n'avons pas à juger. M. Salviati est un heureux chercheur des industries d'art qui ont illustré sa patrie. Ses imitations de Monreale, Saint-Marc et Sainte-Sophie, sont très-recommandables; le travail en est large, hardi et décoratif. Il nous semble que cet art remplacerait avec avantage les essais de fresque appliqués sans succès à l'extérieur de quelques-uns de nos édifices.

§ 4. — Ameublement religieux.

L'art religieux, ou plutôt l'ameublement ecclésiastique, nous a offert peu d'œuvres sérieuses à examiner, et cette branche, dans la section française, ne paraît traitée, sauf quelques ex-

ceptions, que par des artistes secondaires (nous ne parlons ni des vitraux, ni de l'orfévrerie qui sont admirablement représentés, mais qui ne ressortissent pas de nos classes): nous regrettons cette insuffisance. Les églises ne devraient être décorees, ameublées, que par l'art le plus pur, le plus élevé; mieux vaudrait la plus grande simplicité que ces moulages coloriés, si vulgaires, si fâcheux pour la dignité du culte, et qui ne sont que les produits d'une industrie purement commerciale. Nous l'avons dit, quelques exceptions, malheureusement rares, doivent être faites à ce sévère jugement: ainsi en faveur de l'autel déjà cité de MM. Baud et Penel, d'un autre en pierre de M. Bonnet père, et des terres cuites de M<sup>me</sup> V<sup>ve</sup> Debay.

En Angleterre, les constructions religieuses, par les éléments que nous avons pu examiner, semblent être le sujet d'une étude suivie avec passion; mais les meubles, les ornements pour le service ecclésiastique, que nous a fait voir l'exposition anglaise, sont d'un intérêt médiocre. Dans les sections belge et hollandaise, cet art se maintient sans progrès sur les Expositions précédentes: MM. Goyers de Louvain, et Kuypers d'Amsterdam, nous semblent les représentants les plus recommandables d'un art si digne du talent des meilleurs artistes.

#### § 5. — Carton-pierre.

L'emploi du carton-pierre, dans la décoration intérieure des palais et maisons, s'est beaucoup développé, et cette fabrication compte de nombreux représentants à l'Exposition. M. Delapierre nous a donné le meilleur spécimen de cette industrie dans une paroi de salon. La disposition en est simple et élégante; les profils des moulures sont étudiés avec soin, l'ornementation, ample et sagelement est contenue dans ses limites; l'aspect général offre de la grandeur, et l'exécution est excellente. Nous mentionnerons aussi les expositions de MM. Huber, Hardoin, Rosetti et Baillif, et Jackson, de Londres, qui soutiennent dignement la réputation de leurs maisons.

§ 6. — Miroiterie.

Les exposants français paraissent les maîtres de cette industrie par la richesse et la variété de leurs produits, rappelant tous les travaux des anciennes miroiteries française et italienne. M. Alexandre, par des glaces habilement encadrées de bronze, de verre taillé, et surtout par son cadre en vieil argent qui est une œuvre d'art, nous a semblé occuper le premier rang. M. Chamouillet est encore un fabricant digne d'être remarqué ; son exposition justifie bien la réputation de son ancienne et honorable maison. Parmi les étrangers, M. Polhmann, de Belgique, mérite une mention exceptionnelle, pour une console surmontée d'un grand cadre d'un style un peu lourd, mais d'un grand effet.

### CHAPITRE III.

#### CONSIDÉRATIONS GÉNÉRALES.

Après cet examen très-incomplet des œuvres exposées, si nous cherchons à caractériser la physionomie des principales nations concurrentes, nous trouverons, pour la France, une recherche électique du beau à toutes les époques ; une facile divination des procédés anciens, une vive intelligence chez l'ouvrier ; chez l'artiste, une invention remarquable, malheureusement plus désireuse de déterminer la mode que de créer un art national ; un goût répandu, aimable, ingénieux, des efforts considérables dans toutes les directions. Il est à regretter que ces efforts tendent de plus en plus à la recherche du style néo-grec, qui ne peut être qu'une évolution passagère de nos artistes ; et n'est pas appelé à créer un art capable de caractériser notre époque.

L'Italie ressent encore la profonde influence qu'exerça le cavalier Bernin dans cette contrée, et particulièrement à Rome :

une certaine faconde, des formes exagérées, tourmentées, des richesses mal réglées, particularisent sa production. Mais il lui reste une main d'œuvre habile, une vitalité énergique, et la nation qui compte dans la pléiade de ses immortels artistes, les Donatello, les Ghiberti, les della Robbia, les Benvenuto, saura retourner aux sources pures de l'art, et se souvenir de Florence plus encore que de la Ville éternelle.

L'Angleterre se distingue par un grand essor dans les industries d'art. Son goût national pour les époques gothiques et pour celle de la reine Élisabeth se conserve encore dans ses meubles; elle semble, toutefois sous l'influence des artistes français qu'elle emploie, rechercher des types plus rapprochés des temps actuels. Nous avons remarqué dans quelques œuvres réussies, l'étude de la renaissance italienne, due aux travaux de notre collègue M. Digby Wyatt au palais de Sydenham et surtout à la direction de South-Kensington. Nous saisirons de nouveau l'occasion de signaler l'influence heureuse produite par cette magnifique création, subventionnée maintenant par l'État. De même que nos manufactures impériales, ces établissements, dégagés des préoccupations de l'intérêt privé, rendent des services considérables à l'industrie, par la recherche constante de l'art appliquée à l'industrie dans ses dernières limites(1). La Commission impériale a pensé avec justice que ces institutions possédaient de trop grands avantages pour les admettre à la participation des récompenses, et le Jury n'a pu que donner des louanges à leurs beaux travaux si légitimement admirés du public.

La Russie possède d'admirables matières propres à exprimer

(1) La Suisse suit l'exemple de l'Angleterre, et a créé récemment à Zurich un Institut Polytechnique, où des professeurs distingués enseignent les sciences et les arts, dans toutes leurs branches d'application. M. Semper, l'un de ces professeurs, célèbre par ses travaux d'érudition, et les monuments que la Saxe doit à son talent, est l'architecte de l'Institut de Zurich, il a donné dans la salle principale de cette construction, les preuves d'une étude accomplie des œuvres de la renaissance qui attestent son goût et sa science profonde.

mer la richesse de son origine asiatique, et dont le caractère dans les arts pourrait offrir d'heureuses inspirations à son industrie, mais elle paraît l'oublier volontairement, et recherche exclusivement dans l'ameublement le goût français, qui s'étiole rapidement dans la fabrication russe comme une plante transportée en dehors de son climat. La Prusse poursuit depuis longtemps une appropriation des arts classiques à son industrie artistique; sauf quelques exceptions remarquables dans les arts de la métallurgie, ses efforts ont paru stériles, principalement pour l'ameublement ; il ne nous semble pas qu'ils soient dans le génie progressif de ce peuple. Les autres contrées allemandes n'ont rien qui les particularise. En étudiant l'art de leur pays dans le passé, chez les Albert Dürer et les sculpteurs de Nüremberg, l'Allemagne trouverait plus judicieusement l'expression de sa belle intelligence. Nous avons signalé déjà les louables tendances du Danemark pour conserver un cachet national. L'Espagne, le Portugal n'offrent une apparence d'originalité que dans les fabrications rudimentaires, et dans celles d'objets d'un usage vulgaire. Cette remarque s'applique à toutes les nations de second ordre : chaque fois qu'elles fabriquent pour les classes fortunées, elles empruntent à Paris le goût, la forme de leurs produits.

Nous ne terminerons pas ce rapport sans exprimer une réflexion qui nous paraît convenablement placée en présence de l'Exposition des arts et de l'industrie, et qui ne doit pas être perdue de vue par les artistes industriels. L'industrie est mère de l'art, qui lui donne à son tour son éclat et sa beauté. L'art naît des premiers besoins de l'homme, dans les assises même du travail. L'artiste industriel ne doit pas l'oublier : qu'il visite les musées, étudie l'art pur, auquel il doit un culte constant, qu'il y cherche l'inspiration, la loi, la règle de la beauté éternelle; mais qu'il la féconde dans l'usine, dans l'atelier, par l'étude des procédés du travail, et dans cette voie nouvelle, où l'industrie française est vigoureusement entrée, nous mettons nos meilleures espérances.

On a dit des époques où l'architecture, la peinture et la sculpture florissaient, qu'elles avaient été les plus fécondes pour les industries artistiques. Nous reconnaissons la justesse de cette remarque, et il est certain que, quand la décadence se manifeste dans les sphères élevées de l'art, le niveau du goût baisse rapidement dans toutes les productions dont il s'inspire. Mais une époque peut produire de très-grands artistes, et se trouver stérile dans les œuvres de l'art industriel. Le commencement de notre siècle nous en montre un exemple incontestable.

Certes, on peut affirmer que, depuis Lesueur, Lebrun et le Poussin, l'École française n'avait pas eu d'artistes aussi considérables que ceux que notre génération a vus mourir, et cependant les mêmes années qui ont été témoins de leur gloire, sont d'une véritable pauvreté pour les industries d'art. Cet oubli de la grâce, ce manque de la maestria qui régnaient encore dans l'art facile et secondaire de Louis XV et de Louis XVI, cette absence de bon sens et de toute facture habile, dans un temps où fleurissaient de grands artistes, est contraire à tous les enseignements de l'histoire. Nous voudrions en rechercher la cause, comme un sujet d'étude instructif pour notre industrie. Cette cause doit être attribuée, selon nous, à la disparition de l'artiste industriel à l'époque dont nous parlons.

Au commencement de ce siècle, le fabricant qui désirait se distinguer, donner un renom à sa maison, s'adressait à des talents souvent d'une grande et légitime renommée, mais qui ignoraient les conditions du travail industriel, nées du nouvel état progressif de la science appliquée à la fabrication. Ces artistes, architectes et peintres, absorbés par l'étude des époques classiques, en reproduisaient les formes pour des objets destinés à l'usage d'une civilisation toute moderne, dédaignant la différence profonde qui existe entre notre climat, nos mœurs, nos besoins, et ceux de ces sociétés disparues depuis des siècles. Du concours de ces maîtres éminents résultats une

autre erreur : l'application directe à l'industrie du grand art et particulièrement des règles de l'architecture. Le meuble, la pendule prenaient sous leur crayon des formes monumentales ; le fauteuil devenait une chaise curule ; le vase, un tableau ; une table, un cadre pour le portrait des maréchaux de l'empire ; un service de table, une série de vues de villes, de paysages historiques ; le tapis se composait comme un plafond, et le lit du vainqueur de Marengo s'ornementait des casques d'Hector, d'Achille et des trophées de Méléagre. Cet art s'emparait complètement de l'ameublement et le décorait de griffons, de cariatides égyptiennes, de frontons grecs ; il envahissait les produits de l'ébénisterie. Ces froides et fausses applications détruisirent complètement la souplesse et la vie de l'art français. Cette absence de goût se maintint jusqu'à l'époque du réveil des études historiques, où des recherches correspondantes dans l'art amenèrent l'étude du style qui a doté la France de ses admirables édifices religieux, la mode des ameublements à forme ogivale remplaça les formes grecques et romaines. Cette évolution eut un heureux résultat ; un certain nombre d'architectes distingués descendirent des hauteurs de leur art classique, se firent dessinateurs ecclésiologues, étudièrent les meubles, les étoffes, la serrurerie du moyen âge, et produisirent des œuvres intéressantes, mais inapplicables à nos usages modernes. Par une pente naturelle de l'esprit, du moyen âge on fut conduit à étudier la Renaissance, et successivement les époques plus rapprochées de notre temps.

L'artiste et le fabricant durent à ces recherches la découverte de trésors connus seulement de l'antiquaire. Un homme de goût et de grand savoir, M. Du Sommerard, créa le musée de Cluny, une des collections les plus célèbres de l'Europe ; l'ameublement français du XIII<sup>e</sup> au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle fut étudié avec passion ; on connut le mérite et la beauté des œuvres de ces imagiers, verriers, tailleurs de pierre, sculpteurs sur bois, jusqu'alors dédaignés ; on comprit combien ces artisans étaient logiques dans leur judicieux emploi des matériaux ; on apprit

la raison de la division des panneaux d'une boiserie, d'un meuble par la largeur donnée du chêne, du noyer; on s'appliqua à adapter la forme à la matière, en donnant aux moulures l'accentuation, le profil le plus propre à faire valoir la beauté de la fibre du bois, du grain et du poli du marbre, en un mot, les diverses qualités des diverses matières. On reconnaît l'ingénieux caractère de l'ornementation des objets en fer, exigé par le travail du marteau; l'on s'aperçut que le dessin d'une étoffe consistait moins dans le trait, dans le modelé de l'ornement ou de la fleur, que dans les colorations déterminant les formes expressives des contours généraux.

Grâce à ces études nombreuses, secondaires pour la science du peintre et de l'architecte, le dessinateur industriel se forma. Dans un rang modeste, il contribua utilement à la diffusion, au développement de l'art qui, du sommet élevé où il satisfait les plus nobles et les plus délicates aspirations de l'esprit, vient, par des ramifications se divisant à l'infini, embellir les palais des rois, l'intérieur de nos habitations, et descend jusqu'aux objets les plus usuels de la vie journalière.

Les fabricants ont senti combien ces hommes étaient d'indispensables coopérateurs; ils ont reconnu le profit économique et artistique résultant de leur adjonction, en les attachant à leurs maisons. Les dessinateurs, les sculpteurs, les peintres ont trouvé dans cette branche de l'art des carrières lucratives, leur procurant même des récompenses honorifiques, qui attestent leur mérite et leurs services. Ils entrèrent dans la vie de l'atelier et complétèrent la science de leur art par l'habileté de l'ouvrier, que donnent une constante pratique et le maniement journalier de l'outil. Les avantages de cette association se manifestèrent rapidement. L'Angleterre suivit notre exemple, et les expositions internationales ont donné des témoignages éclatants de cette nouvelle et salutaire direction.

Qu'on ne le perde pas de vue, c'est toute une industrie nouvelle, c'est tout un art nouveau qui a été ressuscité; source de prospérité et d'honneur pour la France, qui occupe le pre-

mier rang dans cette application de l'intelligence et du travail. Cette résurrection véritable, on la doit à cette classe d'artistes qui sont à la fois des artistes et des ouvriers. L'aperçu, que nous avons cherché à donner, de l'histoire des progrès de l'art industriel dans ces dernières années, le prouve : ce ne sont pas les maîtres du grand art qui peuvent suffisamment adapter les arts aux produits de l'industrie ; leur place est ailleurs, elle est plus haut (1) ; c'est à d'autres, c'est à des artistes artisans, si nous pouvons ainsi parler, qu'il faut demander cette application de l'art.

Dans notre rapport sur la classe 14, nous avons eu occasion d'indiquer quelques mesures à prendre pour instruire et en courager les artistes industriels et les hommes de métier en général. Nous ne reviendrons pas sur ces indications ; nous ajouterons seulement une réflexion. Le régime des corporations et des maîtrises, à côté d'inconvénients graves qui l'ont fait juger, présentait certains avantages ; il offrait aux artisans, dans chaque métier, un enseignement technique et des traditions. Mais il n'est pas nécessaire de rétablir les jurandes et les maîtrises pour retrouver ces avantages.

Le travail libre, si supérieur sous tous les autres rapports, ne doit pas être un désavantage pour l'éducation des artistes et la perfection des produits. La division du travail, ce levier si puissant de l'industrie, rétrécit, en le spécialisant à l'excès, l'esprit de l'artiste industriel. Les musées, les écoles que nous avons proposé d'ouvrir, lui permettront de comprendre l'ensemble des objets dont il fabrique une partie seulement. Cette vue plus générale élargira son esprit, développera en lui le génie d'invention et lui donnera le désir et la possibilité d'élever sa condition.

(1) Personne n'ignore que de grands artistes ont illustré l'industrie par des œuvres restées célèbres. Mais loin d'être infirmée, notre opinion est fortifiée par ces exemples. Les grands artistes qui nous les offrent appartiennent surtout à la Renaissance : or, on sait qu'à cette époque les grands maîtres se mêlaient aux artisans et acquéraient, au milieu d'eux, la connaissance des métiers. Les choses ont changé : le grand art, et l'art industriel, n'ont plus ces constants rapports.

Nous sommes sûrs que les hommes à qui sont remis d'aussi grands intérêts, et qui ont souci de la prospérité de la France, ne laisseront pas tarir ces sources abondantes de travail, de richesse et de gloire.

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